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ON TABLE
Regular Council,
December 2, 2024
Item 6.1.b.

Schedule 1 to the Minutes
of the December 2, 2024
Regular Council Meeting

November 27, 2024

Mayor and Council
City of New Westminster
511 Royal Avenue
New Westminster, BC V3L 1H9
clerks@newwestcity.ca

Dear Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council,

I am writing you today to share our Population and Public Health team's enthusiastic support regarding New Westminster's interest in exploring options to limit number and location of vape shops. We share your concern about vaping impacts on the New Westminster community, particularly youth. According to the 2024 McCreary Adolescent Health Survey, **one in five youth** in the Fraser North region (New Westminster, Burnaby, Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows, Tri-cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody) have used vapour products. Of the youth who have tried vaping, over half (54%) had vaped in the last 30 days.ⁱ Vaping among youth and adolescents carries significant health risks related to the negative impacts on youth brain function and developmentⁱⁱ and pulmonary and cardiovascular disease.ⁱⁱⁱ

The proliferation of vape shops in communities raises concerns about public health and youth exposure to harmful substance. Evidence has shown that proximity and density of retail vape outlets is a key predictor of youth nicotine use.^{iii, iv} Areas with high concentrations of vape retailers see increased rates of vaping in adolescents, who are particularly influenced by availability and environmental factors like marketing and advertising.^{iv} Despite claims from the tobacco and nicotine industries that these products are effective and accessible cessation tools, vaping devices are not approved for smoking cessation by Health Canada. Research shows that youth and adolescents are using these products recreationally rather than to quit smoking, contributing to higher rates of nicotine dependency rather than harm reduction.^{iii, v}

We encourage New Westminster to adopt evidence-based bylaws to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the community, particularly the youth. By implementing zoning regulations, proximity guidelines, and licensing requirements, the city can manage the density and accessibility of vape shops, reducing youth exposure and the associated health risks of vaping. We commend your forward-thinking approach to addressing this issue and your commitment to prioritizing the health and wellbeing of your community.

Medical Health Officer
Fraser Health



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We would be happy to further assist staff wherever possible. We look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carolyn Wonneck
Medical Health Officer – Medical Director
Fraser Health

ⁱ Smith, A., Poon, C., Peled, M., Forsyth, K., Saewyc, E., & McCreary Centre Society. (2024). The Big Picture: An overview of the 2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey provincial results. McCreary Centre Society. Retrieved from [2023_bcahs_fraser_north.pdf \(mcs.bc.ca\)](https://www25.intelnet.bc.ca/bcahs/fraser_north.pdf)

ⁱⁱ Chadi, N., Vyver, E., & Bélanger, R. E. (2021). Protecting children and adolescents against the risks of Vaping. *Paediatrics & Child Health*, 26(6), 358-365.

ⁱⁱⁱ Rotermann, M. and Gilmour, H. (2022). Correlates of vaping among adolescents in Canada. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2022007/article/00003-eng.htm>

^{iv} Travis, N, Levy, D, T, McDaniel PA, et al. (2022). Tobacco retail availability, cigarette, and e-cigarette use among youth and adults: a scoping review. *Tobacco Control* 2022;31:e175-e188. <https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/tobaccocontrol/31/e2/e175.full.pdf>

^v Hammond, D., & Reid, J. L. (2023). Trends in vaping and nicotine product used among youth in Canada, England and the USA between 2017 and 2022: Evidence to inform policy. *Tobacco Control*.