



Australian Government

Department of Health
Therapeutic Goods Administration

Consumers urged to see their GP ahead of changes to nicotine vaping laws

12 August 2021

Users of nicotine vaping products are encouraged to make an appointment with their GP to discuss their smoking cessation options, ahead of changes from 1 October 2021.

The regulatory changes mean that consumers will need a valid prescription to legally obtain nicotine vaping products, such as nicotine e-cigarettes, nicotine pods and liquid nicotine, from an overseas website. A valid prescription is already required to purchase nicotine vaping products from Australian pharmacies. Purchase of nicotine vaping products from other Australian sources is already not permitted and will remain illegal.

These changes balance the need to prevent adolescents and young adults from taking-up nicotine vaping (and potentially smoking), while enabling current smokers to readily access these products for smoking cessation with appropriate medical advice.

GPs can now provide funded face-to-face and telehealth nicotine and smoking cessation counselling services, that are covered under new temporary Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items. There is no requirement for the patient to have an established clinical relationship with the GP.

There are currently three pathways GPs can use to prescribe these products: becoming an Authorised Prescriber, through the Special Access Scheme, and providing a prescription for 3 months' supply via the Personal Importation Scheme. Application to become an Authorised Prescriber takes only a couple of minutes and is free.

While the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has not yet registered any nicotine vaping products, the TGA is working closely with several potential applicant companies.

For consumers seeking to import nicotine vaping products after 1 October 2021, it is important that they arrange for a copy of their prescription to be enclosed in the package being shipped to them.

From 1 October, Australian Border Force officials can stop an import at the Australian border and destroy the product if they suspect that it is unlawful and there is not a prescription available.

Further information:

- Visit the [Nicotine vaping products \(//www.tga.gov.au/nicotine-vaping-products\)](https://www.tga.gov.au/nicotine-vaping-products) hub
- Read the consumer blog article [Nicotine e-cigarette laws are changing \(//www.tga.gov.au/blogs/tga-topics/nicotine-e-cigarettes-laws-are-changing\)](https://www.tga.gov.au/blogs/tga-topics/nicotine-e-cigarettes-laws-are-changing)

- Watch the consumer video [Legally accessing nicotine vaping products in Australia](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XB5-Fdg9LI) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XB5-Fdg9LI>)

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