

To quote:  
Dr Arifin Fii  
President of Advanced Centre for Addiction Treatment Advocacy (ACATA)

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **BAN ON VAPE SENDS THE WRONG MESSAGE**

Advanced Centre for Addiction Treatment Advocacy (ACATA) disagrees with the Government's move to ban less harmful alternatives including vape.

While ACATA is encouraged by the Government's commitment to reduce smoking prevalence in the country, a sweeping, catch-all ban that includes harm reduced products such as vape, is going to be counter-productive.

The tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest public health threats to the world, killing more than 8 million people a year, including around 1.2 million deaths from exposure to second-hand smoke. It kills 27,200 Malaysians annually.

Stagnating Malaysian prevalence of smoking warrants a more realistic solution in tackling the country's smoking problem. Misinformation and inaccurate theories will certainly not improve, let alone solve the problem.

There is substantial and credible evidence to support that vape products are much less harmful than smoking. Evidence also show that vaping efficiently helps smokers to quit. Further, studies have shown that the percentage of never smokers who take up vape is significantly small.

This is especially true in Malaysia. A [local study in 2020](#) found that only 0.6% of non-smokers use vape, debunking the fact that vape appeals to new users.

Therefore, it is very inapprehensible for the government to take such a counter-productive measure which will deny current smokers' access to vape, a less harmful alternative to tobacco smoking, which causes overwhelming number of deaths. This move sends a wrong message to current smokers as the Government portrays vape to be as harmful as traditional cigarettes without any differentiation.

The ban on less harmful alternatives including vape will make it inaccessible and thus make quitting smoking harder for current smokers. As a result, Malaysia's smoking prevalence will continue to stagnate, if not grow, over the next decade.

ACATA believes that it is important for all stakeholders to work together to develop an appropriate regulatory approach which provides consumers who might otherwise continue to smoke, the accessibility and the confidence to use the less harmful products.