

Statement from the BPRS President on the Ban of Disposable Vapes

The British Paediatric Respiratory Society (BPRS) strongly welcomes the implementation of the UK Government's ban on disposable vapes, which came into effect on 31 May 2025. This marks a critical and evidence-based step in protecting children from nicotine addiction and the harmful respiratory effects of vaping. Disposable vapes have been a major driver of youth vaping, with nearly 1 in 10 secondary school pupils now regularly using e-cigarettes. These devices, often cheap, sweet-flavoured, and brightly coloured, have been heavily marketed to children and young people. As paediatric respiratory clinicians, we are seeing the consequences – increasing reports of coughing, wheeze and breathlessness in children who vape, many of whom have never smoked. These products are not risk-free, and the long-term impacts on developing lungs remain unknown. We are also pleased to see recognition of the significant environmental harm posed by disposable vapes – with over 5 million discarded weekly, they contribute to lithium waste, fires in recycling plants, and wider pollution.

While the ban is a welcome step forward, it must be accompanied by robust enforcement to ensure products do not remain widely available through non-compliant retailers or online platforms. This must also be seen as the start of a wider drive to protect child health. We urge the Government to fully deliver on the Tobacco and Vapes Bill – including restrictions on flavours, plain packaging, and removing vape displays from sight in shops. Tighter controls on marketing, alongside public education and monitoring of emerging products, are vital to prevent further harm. At the same time, smoking remains the leading cause of preventable illness and death, and we fully support measures to phase out tobacco sales to the next generation. The BPRS remains committed to working with partners across child health to create a truly smoke-free generation – one where no child becomes addicted to nicotine or has their lung health compromised by vaping or smoking.

Dr Julian Legg

President, British Paediatric Respiratory Society

1st June 2025