



Japan: Progress towards a smoke-free future

Japan is a compelling example of the significant role smoke-free alternatives can play to deliver a smoke-free future. It has shown promising signs that cigarettes can be a thing of the past.

Two independent studies show that cigarette sales in Japan decreased at an accelerated pace after a number of manufacturers introduced heated tobacco products (HTPs), including Philip Morris International (PMI)¹ to the market.

According to the study conducted for the American Cancer Society, cigarette sales had been declining by around 1.8% per year prior to the introduction, but this accelerated to 9.5% per year when PMI's leading heated tobacco product, IQOS, was available. The authors concluded it was the introduction of our HTP which "likely reduced cigarette sales in Japan".² The other study authored by K. Michael Cummings, Georges J. Nahhas and Professor David Sweanor, which uses a statistical model built on data from the Tobacco Institute of Japan and from PMI's quarter results, comes to a similar conclusion, that "the accelerated decline in cigarette only sales in Japan since 2016 corresponds to the introduction and growth in the sales of HTPs".³



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Assessing the positive impact

In a number of countries, including Japan, we have initiated repeated cross-sectional studies among the adult general population and among owners of PMI's HTPs, with the main objective of understanding current and past use of tobacco and nicotine containing products. During the first year of cross-sectional post-market study, in Japan we surveyed a representative sample of approximately 5,000 participants from the adult general population and a sample of 2,000 owners of PMI's HTPs.

The data confirmed that our HTP is reaching the intended audience, adult smokers, and is of very limited interest to adults who have never used nicotine products before, or adults who

had already completely stopped using all kinds of nicotine containing products. Independent studies also confirm low interest in HTPs among youth. According to a study commissioned by the Japanese Ministry of Health, conducted among 22,275 middle-school and 42,142 high school students in Japan between December 2017 and February 2018, the use of HTPs is low, and lower than smoking cigarettes.⁴ Of course, the best thing a smoker can do is to quit cigarettes and nicotine altogether. But the reality is that many do not. Japan is just one example of how smoke-free alternatives can complement already existing tobacco control measures such as the encouragement of cessation and prevention of initiation.

Science-backed, smoke-free alternatives can complement existing measures to help address the global health issue of smoking by providing an avenue for adults who don't quit tobacco and nicotine altogether to make a better choice than continued smoking. Coupled with the right regulatory encouragement and support from society, we can reach a smoke-free future, faster.

¹ PMI launched its electrically heated tobacco product IQOS in 2015, following a city pilot in 2014.

² Stoklosa M, Cahn Z, Liber A, et al., "Effect of IQOS introduction on cigarette sales: evidence of decline and replacement", British Medical Journal, June 2019, <https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/early/2019/06/11/tobaccocontrol-2019-054998>

³ Cummings K, Nahhas G, Sweanor D, "What Is Accounting for the Rapid Decline in Cigarette Sales in Japan?", Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health, May 2020.

⁴ Osaki Y, et al. "Field survey on drinking and smoking and the development of effective alcohol reduction intervention approaches for the prevention of lifestyle-related diseases." Annual Report of MHLW Research Committee, May 2018.

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