doi:10.22100/ijhs.v11i4.1417
Letter to Editor

SJMS 2025;11(4):68
sjms.shmu.ac.ir

SJMS
Shahroud Journal of Medical Sciences

# Electronic Cigarettes in Workplaces: An Emerging Public Health Challenge

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Received: 26 October 2025
Accepted: 4 November 2025

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**Please cite this paper as:** Ebrahimi MH. Electronic Cigarettes in Workplaces: An Emerging Public Health Challenge. Shahroud Journal of Medical Sciences 2025;11(4):68.

## Letter to the Editor

The proliferation of electronic cigarette use in workplace settings presents an emerging public health challenge that demands immediate attention. While often perceived as a less harmful option compared to conventional tobacco products, evidence increasingly demonstrates that e-cigarette use in shared work environments poses significant health risks that warrant comprehensive policy intervention.

The scientific literature clearly indicates that e-cigarette emissions constitute more than harmless water vapor. These aerosols contain numerous potentially toxic substances, such as nicotine, fine particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, and toxic metals[1]. Secondhand exposure to these emissions represents a particular concern in indoor workplaces, where ventilation systems may recirculate these contaminants throughout shared air spaces.

Recent research has shown that non-users exposed to e-cigarette emissions show detectable levels of nicotine metabolites and report increased respiratory irritation[2]. For vulnerable populations, including employees with pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma, this exposure may precipitate adverse health effects and exacerbate underlying conditions[3].

Furthermore, the common sight of vaping normalizing nicotine use in the workplace potentially undermines tobacco control efforts and could potentially lead to nicotine addiction in people who have never used it before. The presence of vaping devices in work environments also creates challenges for smoking cessation among those attempting to quit tobacco products.

We advocate for the extension of existing smoke-free policies to explicitly include electronic cigarettes in all workplace settings. This evidence-based approach aligns with recommendations from leading health organizations, such as the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, which states that e-cigarettes should not be permitted indoors due to their contaminant emissions[4].

Protecting worker health requires proactive measures to ensure indoor air quality remains uncompromised by e-cigarette emissions. The implementation of comprehensive vape-free workplace policies represents a necessary step toward safeguarding public health in occupational settings.

## Ethical Considerations

Nothing to be reported.

## Acknowledgment

Nothing to be reported.

## Conflict of Interest

Nothing to be reported.

## Funding

Nothing to be reported.

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