

Monday 12th October 2020

For Attention of:

Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction.

Personal Submission of -

Name: Mr Anthony Milton Barron

Age: 48 - 27/02/1972

Occupation: Retail Assistant, packaged liquor sales

Marital Status: Partnered

Children: 4

State: NSW, Corowa

Electorate: Farrer, Hon. Sussan Ley

Former Treatment Practice: Corowa Medicinic. Queen Street, Corowa.

Treatment Doctor: Colin Mendelsohn. Prescriber number 329792

Dear Committee,

My name is Anthony Barron. I am 48 years of age, and have smoked for 40 years starting at a very, very young age when cigarette smoking was a cheap recreational activity partaken by many adults, and a risky daring one for children of which I did do on many multiple occasions. Sometimes stealing a few sticks from my dad's packs as well, or from shops and cafes too. It was all too easy, and I never thought of the consequences I would feel later, nor did I care at all.

Cigarettes were easily obtainable, often advertised on television, billboards, newspapers, and magazines glamorising the activity. Many of the packs just said smoking was a "health hazard" and some inscrutable shop owners would sell the product to myself and friends, without any intervention, fines, or penalties.

This smoking activity for myself led to a lifetime of addiction at the hands of deadly combustible tobacco products of varying strengths all with very addictive qualities – cigars, pipe tobacco, and kretek all of these products developed into well over a pack a day habit, sometimes 2 or even 3, over the years ahead. Let's just say, I am a bit more than addicted, or dependent on nicotine. I have pursued every product and treatment available at the hands of medical professional treatment plans, and professional smoking cessation treatment specialists and Doctors.

I have tried many times to quit with the usual various products – N.R.T patches which result in adverse skin reactions and eczema, inhalers which I find do not work, sprays ineffective. I discussed this with my previous former doctor at Corowa Mediclinic, and he suggested I try Champix. The result was extreme mood swings, continual anxiety, and suicidal tendencies. I have had a few stays in hospital as well, and other institutions. My partner also tried Champix and she found she could not tolerate the drug whatsoever and had quite similar undesirable experiences.

On the week leading into Christmas, my daughter and I were discussing Christmas Presents outside while she was playing, and I was having a cigarette. She approached me and started talking about what she wanted for Christmas, the usual dolls, toys and then said dad you always smell of yucky, smelly, dirty cigarettes.

“For this Christmas I wish for you didn’t smoke...”

“please Dad, promise me you won’t, just don’t do it. Don’t Smoke!” my 7-year-old daughter said

I said, to her, it is just something I do little darlin. Do not ever start, that way you never have to stop.

The next night, we all settled down to watch TV. I happened to see a documentary called the “Big vape.” We watched it. I thought well it has got a few negatives to this vaping, but why not give it a try.... Nothing else has worked, why not?

I am happy to say, on the 24th December 2019 my vaping gear arrived, and, on the 25th December 2019, I had my first vape experience with 12mg Freebase Nicotine juice.

To this date, some 292 days in. I am smoke free due to vaping.

I am the healthiest I have been in decades.

My children appreciate the fact I no longer smell like a dirty ashtray.

I can play, run, and enjoy my family much better than when I was smoking.

I have a prescription but see it as an annoyance when I can simply go and buy cigarettes freely from the corner shop, café, or supermarket, liquor shop, or petrol station.

My promise, made to my daughter, remains intact to this date, any restrictions on nicotine will likely result in my return to my 40-year deadly habit of smoking, very easily.

It is my recommendation the Committee look very closely at the New Zealand, and UK models on vaping – prescriptions are not required there and is a big contribution to the smoke free vision.

Australia, smokers, vapers all stand to benefit by introducing reasonable vaping policies.

I am confident if vaping is introduced and regulated with a controlled model many lives killed by smoking could be stopped. Is it not time for Legalised Vaping in Australia?

There is enough positive evidence to see the harm reduction offered in vaping could indeed save many smokers lives if they make a transition to exclusively vaping. Any of the smoking cessation doctors would conclude this could be a life saver, and a game changer.

A prescription model is flawed with difficulties. I don't like the thought of getting supplies either at a pharmacy. My Location in Regional NSW makes this somewhat more difficult. If I am running short on time I am more likely to return to smoking, and not bother with the hindrance of doctors, scripts, chemists and pharmacies. To much to do with all that, far easier to just buy smokes! I'd rather be able to order from my vape shop, preferably online after providing a copy of my script, than the whole town know I get it from the chemist, or pharmacist!! It's a privacy latter, I live in a small town...

#Vapingsaveslives

#Letozvape

Anyway, I could ramble on lots more. Lots. I will keep it simple, and hope this information is of some help and assistance. My treatment **Doctor is** . I hope you have many submissions and find the information provided from many individuals, and such, of much help, and insight. Thank you for your time. Please, let us vape it is saving our lives, and money!

Yours Sincerely,

Mr. Anthony M Barron.