

Government Investment in Stop Smoking Public Education Campaigns

Overview

The UK Vaping Industry Association (UKVIA) has undertaken an investigation which looks at the government investment in public education campaigns designed to help adult smokers kick the habit, as well as communications focussed on the benefits of vaping as the most effective quitting tool available. This comes at a time when there are six million adult smokers in the UK. It also follows news that half of all smokers wrongly believe vaping is as or more harmful than smoking, and the announcement that Labour's Tobacco and Vapes Bill includes a ban on vape advertising and sponsorship – which critics fear could add to all-time-high misperceptions about vaping and push the nation's smokefree ambitions further out of reach.

As part of the research, the UKVIA issued a Freedom of Information request to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) about its spend on public education campaigns. The following comprises key findings from this research and other relevant information:

Key Facts

£890,000

was the government stop smoking campaign spend for 2022/23 (less than 20p per smoker on average).*

DHSC FOI Data

£3,990,000

was the government stop smoking campaign spend for 2023/24 (less than 70p per smoker on average).*

DHSC FOI Data

£15 Million

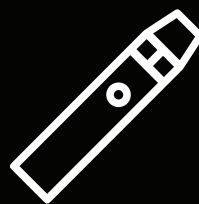
in annual funding for a national mass media campaign recommended by key government-commissioned report.

Khan Review, 2022

£50 Million

Reportedly spent by government to communicate key messages during the COVID pandemic.

Khan Review, 2022



While vaping is mentioned in DHSC smoking campaigns as a method of giving up smoking, no smoking campaigns have been solely directed at vaping

DHSC FOI Data

50%

of all smokers incorrectly believe vaping is more or equally as harmful as smoking - only one third understand vaping is less harmful than smoking

ASH UK, 2024