



## Vaping lands 178 people in hospital including children

Vaping caused serious health problems for 178 people requiring hospital treatment in recent years, including two people who died, and a toddler who was accidentally poisoned.

The latest data from Private Healthcare Australia – the peak body for health insurers – reveals seven children aged under 15 were hospitalised due to a vaping related disorder or injury since 2020, including a two-year-old. Another 19 young people aged 15 – 24 required hospital treatment connected to vaping. The average time spent in hospital was 5.6 days.

CEO of Private Healthcare Australia Dr Rachel David said [the data](#) was likely to be the ‘tip of the iceberg’ because it only included people who used their health insurance for their hospital treatment.

“This is more evidence of the dangerous, addictive threat vaping poses to Australians of all ages, including young people who may not realise they’re gambling with their health,” she said.

“E-cigarettes or vapes might smell sweet and look benign, but [research](#) shows they contain up to 200 chemicals including weed killer and paint stripper. We also know that many of the products claiming to be nicotine-free contain the addictive drug.”

The data shows about one in 10 hospital admissions were for people with mental illnesses, addiction or behavioural disorders, and around one in four people had either a respiratory condition such as asthma, or a heart condition such as high blood pressure. Of all 178 people, 59% were female and 41% male.

Dr David commended the Albanese Government for taking a strong stand against vaping and said its ban on the importation of disposable single use vapes starting this week, 1 January 2024, was a great start.

“Health funds want to protect Australians from the preventable damage vaping causes. We do not want another generation developing nicotine addiction and heart and lung problems like we saw with tobacco. Health funds will continue to work with the Albanese Government on its efforts to eliminate vaping in 2024,” she said.

The hospital admissions cost health funds \$1.23 million, with the median claim costing \$1,960. One in five hospital admissions were classified as ‘high-cost claims’ exceeding \$10,000. Forty per cent of the hospital admissions were in New South Wales, followed by 28% in Queensland, 23% in Victoria, and 3% in both Western Australia and South Australia.

*Private Healthcare Australia is the peak representative body for Australia’s private health insurance industry. PHA represents 21 Australian health funds with a combined membership of over 14.2 million Australians, or 98% of the sector on membership.*