

Tobacco Regulatory Science (TRS) ARC

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The rising popularity of new and emerging tobacco products has raised critical public health and regulatory challenges. In 2009, the US Congress passed the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, which gave the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to regulate tobacco product (traditional cigarettes, smokeless, and roll-your-own tobacco) manufacturing, distribution, and marketing in order to protect human health. In 2016, FDA regulatory authority was extended to new and emerging tobacco products, including electronic(e)-cigarettes, little cigars, cigarillos, premium cigars, hookah/waterpipes, dissolvable tobacco products, and pipe tobacco. While the health, communications, economic, and behavioral effects of combustible cigarettes are well described, the consequences of newer tobacco products on population health are largely unknown. Further, marketing of new tobacco products as an alternative to traditional cigarettes has created confusion and misperceptions around the safety of these products, especially among vulnerable populations, such as racial/ethnic and sexual/gender minority groups. Multi-disciplinary scientific research is needed to inform policy makers of the health, perceptions, economic, and behavioral effects of new and emerging tobacco products in order to develop the appropriate policies to protect human health. In order to facilitate research studies on these new tobacco products, the FDA has created extensive new funding opportunities through the NIH. Because new tobacco products are so diverse in their product design (available in a wide array of flavors, utilize different combustion and heating methods, etc.) and are often used in combinations, new approaches to understanding their toxicity are greatly needed. The goal of our pre-ARC in Tobacco Regulatory Science is to assemble a multi-disciplinary team to tackle questions related to the safety, perceptions, marketing, and use patterns of new and emerging tobacco products and to evaluate the effectiveness of associated regulatory measures.

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