

Smoking abstinence rates associated with 90-day *ad libitum* use of the  
Blu PRO e-cigarette with and without adjunctive support from  
experienced e-cigarette users

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- “The health and life expectancy of today’s smokers could be radically improved by encouraging as many as possible to switch to a smoke-free source of nicotine” (Royal College of Physicians, 2016: p2).
- “... chance of successful quitting with e-cigarettes would be increased if smokers who chose to use them, whether for cutting down or quitting, could also receive additional behavioural support” (Royal College of Physicians, 2016: p129).
- Identifying the individuals who may be best qualified to inform, advise, encourage and support smokers to substitute e-cigarettes for conventional cigarettes is vital.

# Study Rationale

- The vaping community is uniquely experienced and knowledgeable to advise and educate smokers about the true nature and character of vaping.
- Perhaps the best way to understand switching is as a switcher.
- Former smokers who quit smoking by using e-cigarettes (i.e. switchers) are increasingly common in the UK, and uniquely qualified to advise, inform, and motivate current smokers on how to switch to vaping.
- Harm reduction is being driven by millions of peer-learning interactions between vapers and smokers.

- Study to begin August, 2017.
- Two participant groups: 'Switchers' (n = 150) and 'Switching Mentors' (n = 20)
- 'Switchers' are adult nicotine-dependent smokers with an intention to quit smoking within the next 6 months and an interest in using e-cigarettes in place of smoking conventional cigarettes.
- 'Switching Mentors' are former smokers who have quit smoking by using e-cigarettes, have not smoked in at least the past six months, and currently vape daily or almost-daily.

- All Switchers assigned to try using a specific open-system e-cigarette – the Blu PRO – in place of smoking conventional cigarettes for 90 days.
- Blu PRO to be refilled with Blu Liquid, commercially available in the United Kingdom in nine combinations of five flavours and three nicotine strengths.
- Half of Switchers to receive 30 days of community-based support from 20 Switching Mentors.

# The Blu PRO Kit



BLU® TOBACCO LIQUID

BLU® STRAWBERRY MINT LIQUID

BLU® CHERRY LIQUID



BLU® MENTHOL LIQUID



BLU® BLUEBERRY LIQUID

Flavour	Available in nicotine strengths
Tobacco	0.8% and 1.6%
Menthol	1.6%
Blueberry	0% and 1.6%
Cherry	0% and 0.8%
Strawberry Mint	0% and 0.8%

# Procedure for Switchers

- Designed to replicate conditions of 'real world' e-cigarette use as closely as possible.
- Blu PRO Kit plus three 10ml refill bottles provided for free at study intake.
- Switchers encouraged to try using the Blu PRO e-cigarette in place of smoking conventional cigarettes for 90 days, but smoking not prohibited and non-use of Blu PRO not grounds for exclusion.
- Blu PRO to be used *ad libitum*; Switchers free to use as and when they wish.
- Switchers to buy Blu Liquid refills in the flavour and nicotine strength of their choice from local vendors as and when they wish; CSUR to reimburse Switchers up to value of £30 per month (approx six 10ml bottles of Blu Liquid).

# Procedure for Switchers

- Switchers free to change liquid flavour and nicotine strength at any time and often as they want.
- Use of other e-cigarette brands neither discouraged nor prohibited, but not reimbursed.
- Switchers free to contact Switching Mentors as often or a little as they wish; Mentors available to Switchers by phone and email for the first 30 days.
- Only requirement is that Switchers complete online questionnaires about their past 30-day cigarette and e-cigarette use on days 30, 60 and 90.



# Procedure for Mentors

- Mentors' role is to “provide advice, information and motivational support upon request to individuals who are trying to switch from smoking cigarettes to using the Blu PRO e-cigarette for 90 days”.
- Mentors not instructed on how to advise Switchers, or what information they should give; content of advice and information decided by the Mentor.
- Mentors required to be available to Switchers by phone and email between 9am and 9pm, Monday-Friday; Mentors have 24 hours to reply.
- Mentors required to complete online questionnaires about the nature and content of their interactions with Switchers in the past 30 days on days 30, 60 and 90.

# Outcomes

1. Past-30 day point prevalence smoking abstinence at day-30, day-60 and day-90 (between-groups and within-groups).
2. Change in daily cigarette consumption across assessments (between-groups and within-groups).
3. Switchers' use and acceptance of the Blu PRO e-cigarette and Blu e-liquids across assessments (between-groups and within-groups).
4. Switchers' use and perceived helpfulness of interactions with Switching Mentors.
5. Types of advice and information given by Switching Mentors.

# What will this study add?

- Switching rate in close-to-naturalistic conditions, characterised by:
  1. Ad libitum use of an e-cigarette.
  2. Freedom to change flavours and nicotine strength as one wishes.
  3. Minimal experimenter involvement – participants just ‘go about their day’.
- Incremental rate of switching associated with interaction with Switching mentors
- Smokers’ willingness to interact with experienced vapers when attempting to switch to vaping, and what they gain from these interactions.
- Vapers’ willingness to help smokers to switch to vaping, and what they give to these interactions.

Thanks for listening.

Any questions?

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For the study protocol, email Dr Christopher Russell ([russell@csures.org](mailto:russell@csures.org))

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