Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

Heat-not-burn Tobacco Products: Tobacco Industry Claims No Substitute for Science

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In the wake of the rapid rise of e-cigarettes over the past decade, the tobacco industry has launched its latest response to the documented harms of cigarette smoking: heat-not-burn (HNB) tobacco products. Philip Morris International created and is heavily marketing their version of these products, called the IQOS (I Quit Ordinary Smoking), which involves disposable tobacco sticks soaked in propylene glycol that are inserted into a holder in the HNB cigarette. Philip Morris markets these products as being “designed to create a flavorful and satisfying nicotine-containing vapor, without burning and without smoke.” Advertisements claim this product releases no smoke because the tobacco leaves are heated rather than burned, with no tobacco combustion. Claims and distracting wording, however, are no substitute for science. The authors of a recent report have shown that these tobacco products release cancer-causing chemicals.

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