

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi



Analysis for Policy

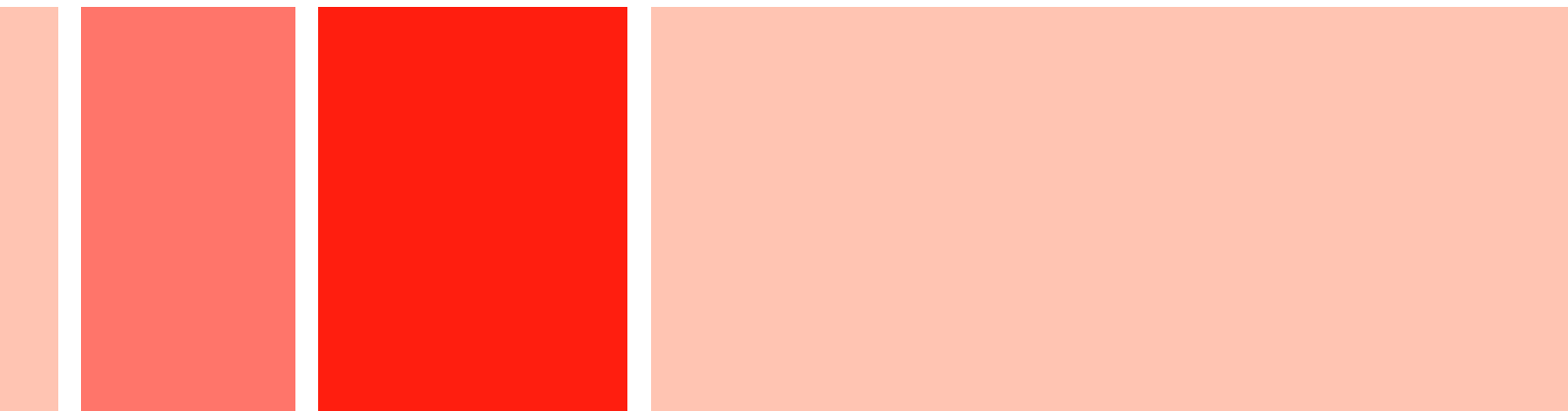


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Social research
Number: 20/2015

E-cigarette policies: A survey of workplaces in Wales



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A survey of workplaces in Wales

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Welsh Government Social Research, 26 March 2015

ISBN 978 1 4734 3322 9

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Key findings

- All workplaces in the Healthy Working Wales (HWW), Corporate Health Standard (CHS) or Small Workplace Health (SWH) schemes were invited to take part in this survey which aimed to gather evidence about the implementation of e-cigarette policies. There were 294 responses out of the 1,507 workplaces invited (a response rate of 20 per cent).
- Half of the large employers (51 per cent) reported that e-cigarettes were currently used on their premises, compared with a quarter (26 per cent) of the small and medium-sized employers (SMEs).
- Almost three quarters (73 per cent) of the large employers had a policy prohibiting e-cigarette use compared with around one third (36 per cent) of the SMEs.
- The principal reasons for developing a policy were to bring e-cigarette use in line with the existing smoke-free policy (79 per cent of the large employers and 59 per cent of the SMEs) and help with its enforcement (71 per cent of the large employers and 59 per cent of the SMEs).
- Normalisation of smoking appeared to be less of a concern, with 33 per cent of the large employers and 29 per cent of the SMEs reporting that they introduced their policy because e-cigarettes make tobacco smoking more acceptable.
- Almost all e-cigarette workplace policies among both the SMEs and large employers covered staff (99 per cent). Between eight and nine out of ten of the policies also covered clients/customers, the public, suppliers/contractors and other visitors.
- Given the conflicting messages surrounding e-cigarettes, some workplaces commented they would like clear guidance from the Welsh Government and public health bodies.

1. Introduction

The Public Health White Paper ‘Listening to you – Your health matters’¹ sets out a series of proposals for legislation to help further improve and protect people’s health and wellbeing in Wales.

One of the proposals within the White Paper is to restrict the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public places in Wales. The proposal aims to address concerns that the use of e-cigarettes makes it difficult to enforce, and undermines, the smoke-free regulations.

It also reflects concerns among some public health practitioners and international organisations such as the World Health Organization² that e-cigarettes could renormalise smoking. However, these views are not universally accepted³, and the different interpretations of the evidence base have been summarised as a debate between those advocating e-cigarettes as a form of harm reduction, and those taking a precautionary approach⁴.

To help address some of these issues and inform the legislative process, the Welsh Government developed an online survey to study e-cigarette policies and their implementation in workplaces across Wales. The questions in the survey focused on establishing whether workplaces had an e-cigarette policy; why a policy had been developed; and what the policy covered. The survey aimed to provide policy makers with some basic evidence on:

- awareness of the use of e-cigarettes on workplace premises;
- whether workplaces have an e-cigarette policy;
- the reasons for deciding to develop, or not develop, a policy;
- the nature of the policies and what they cover;

¹ <http://gov.wales/consultations/healthsocialcare/white-paper/?status=closed&lang=en>

² WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Sixth session, Moscow, Russian Federation, 13–18 October 2014.

³ See, for example: McNeill, A. et al (2014). ‘A critique of a World Health Organization-commissioned report and associated paper on electronic cigarettes’, *Addiction*, 109(12): 2128-2134.

⁴ See, for example: Fairchild, A.L. and Bayer, R. (2015). ‘Smoke and fire over e-cigarettes’, *Science*, 347(6220): 375-376

- whether workplaces were using a policy for enforcement of the current smoke-free legislation; and
- the extent to which e-cigarettes were perceived by workplaces as normalising smoking behaviour.

2. Methods

All workplaces in the Healthy Working Wales (HWW) network⁵, or following the Corporate Health Standard⁶ (CHS) or Small Workplace Health⁷ (SWH) award scheme, were invited to take part in the survey (questionnaire attached at Annex A). With limited time and resources available to conduct the survey, this sample frame was chosen as they are an established network of workplaces covering the whole of Wales, with readily available email contacts. Emails containing a link to the online survey, using SNAP software, were distributed to the workplaces in the HWW, CHS and SWH schemes. The questionnaire was available bilingually in English and Welsh. A follow-up reminder email was sent out one week prior to the survey closing date to encourage responses.

The survey was designed to be completed quickly in order to minimise burden on respondents. For the majority of questions a response was not made mandatory by the survey software, therefore respondents could choose not to answer if preferred. Several questions in the survey allowed respondents to include further comments and a selection of these are included in the report to illustrate the views of survey responses from SMEs and large employers.

The survey fieldwork period ran from the 10 to 26 September 2014, with a few responses received after this date. In total, 1,507 workplaces in Wales were invited by the Welsh Government to take part in the survey, with 294 valid responses received.

The following chapter presents the survey findings about e-cigarette use and policy in the responding workplaces in Wales.

⁵ Delivered in partnership by the Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and Cardiff University. It aims to reduce work sickness and absence by promoting health and wellbeing, a good work-life balance and healthy lifestyles. See www.healthyworkingwales.com

⁶ An initiative for employers to improve the health of the workforce and their organisation. See www.gov.wales/topics/health/improvement/work/corporate

⁷ The national mark of quality for health and wellbeing in the workplace, for businesses and organisations employing fewer than 50 people. See www.gov.wales/topics/health/improvement/work/small

3. Findings

3.1 Sample profile

In total, there were 294 valid responses to the survey out of the 1,507 workplaces invited (a response rate of 20 per cent). This included 213 small and medium sized employers (SMEs, with up to 249 employees) and 81 large employers (with 250 or more employees). In this report, findings are presented for SMEs and large employers – given the small sub-sample sizes, it was not feasible to break these categories down further.

This survey intended to assess e-cigarette policies in workplaces associated with the HWW, CHS or SWH schemes. Given the response rates and the different make up of this sample and Welsh employers as a whole, the findings should not be interpreted as necessarily being representative of all workplaces across Wales.

As Table 3.1 (below) shows, compared with estimated figures for Wales as a whole, small employers are under-represented in the survey sample, while medium and large employers are over-represented (largely accounted for by the vast number of micro businesses in Wales⁸). In addition, while less than one per cent of employers in Wales are public sector organisations, 45 per cent of responses received in this survey were from public sector workplaces.

Table 3.1: Employer size of survey sample

Employer size	Survey sample		Estimates for Wales ^a	
	N	%	N	%
Small (0-49)	162	55	227,400	98
Medium (50-249)	51	17	2,100	1
Large (250+)	81	28	1,700	1
TOTAL	294	100	231,200	100

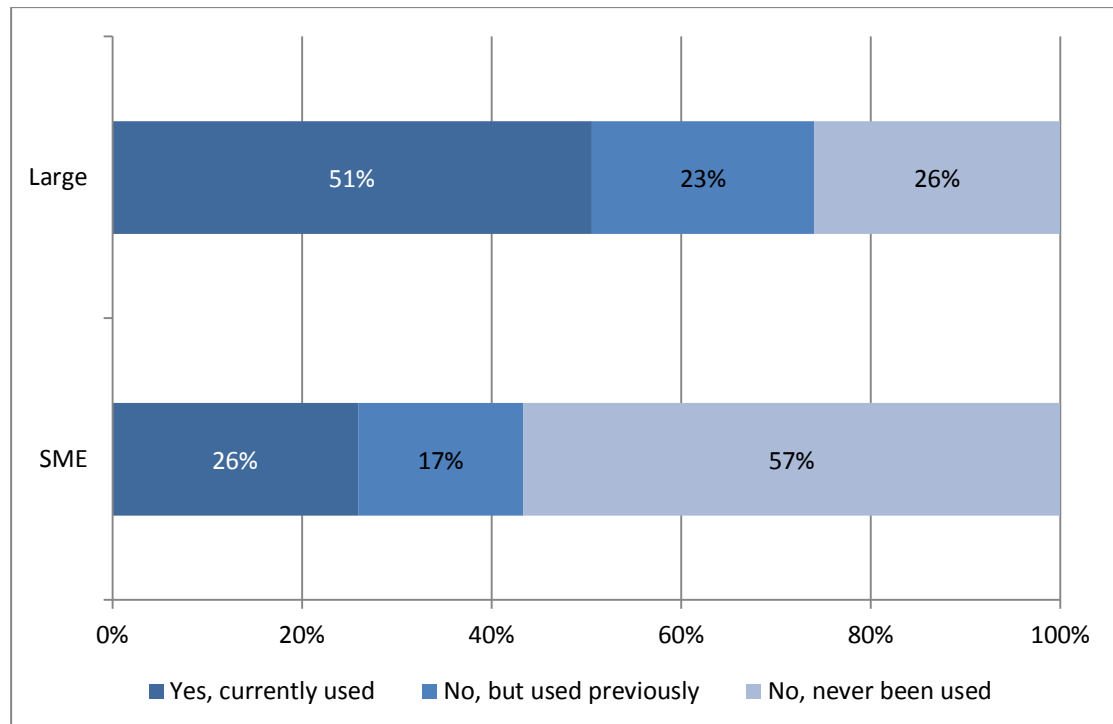
(a) Estimates based on Welsh Government (2014) 'Size analysis of Welsh businesses' and assumption that most public sector organisations are large employers.

⁸ Almost 95 per cent of private enterprises in Wales have fewer than 10 employees (see <http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2014/141023-size-analysis-welsh-business-2014-en.pdf>)

3.2 Awareness of e-cigarettes being used on premises

Workplaces were asked if they were aware of e-cigarettes being used on their premises. As Figure 3.1 shows, half of the large employers (51 per cent) reported that e-cigarettes were currently used on the premises compared with a quarter (26 per cent) of SMEs.

Figure 3.1: Are you aware of e-cigarettes being used on your premises?



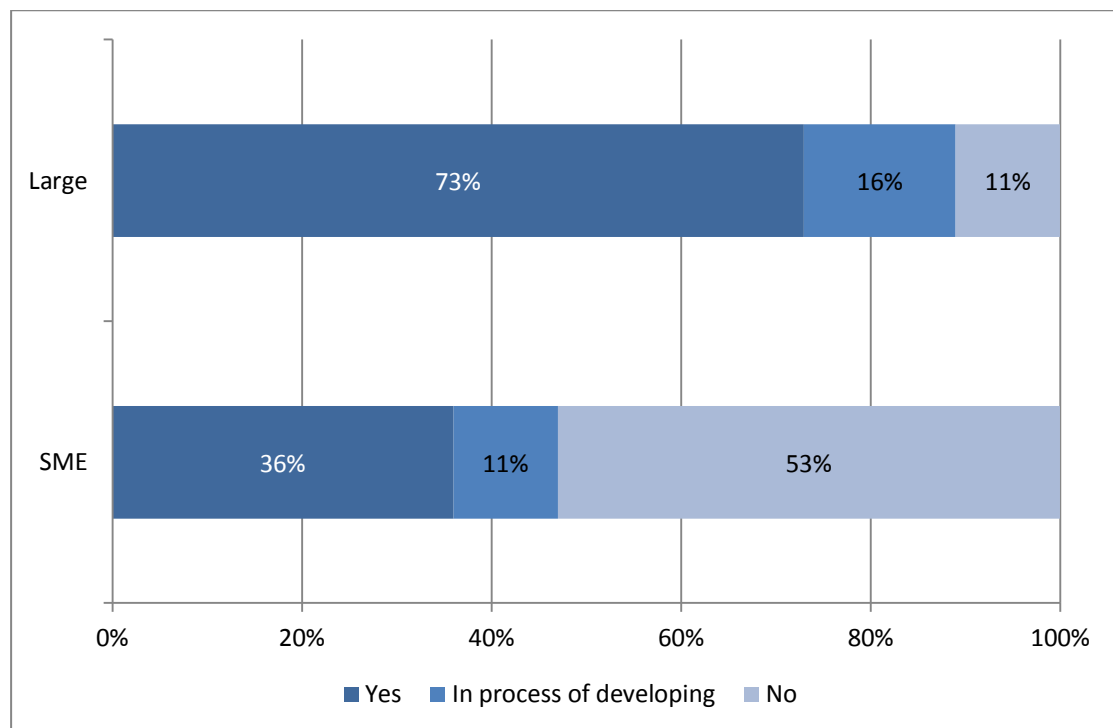
N=294 (SME = 213; Large = 81)

3.3 Policies to prohibit use of e-cigarettes

Workplaces were asked if they had a policy prohibiting e-cigarettes or if they were in the process of developing one.

Almost three quarters (73 per cent) of large employers had an e-cigarette policy, while another 16 per cent were in the process of developing one. In comparison, around one third (36 per cent) of SMEs had an e-cigarette policy, with another 11 per cent being in the process of developing one (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Do you have, or intend to have, a policy prohibiting e-cigarette use on the premises?

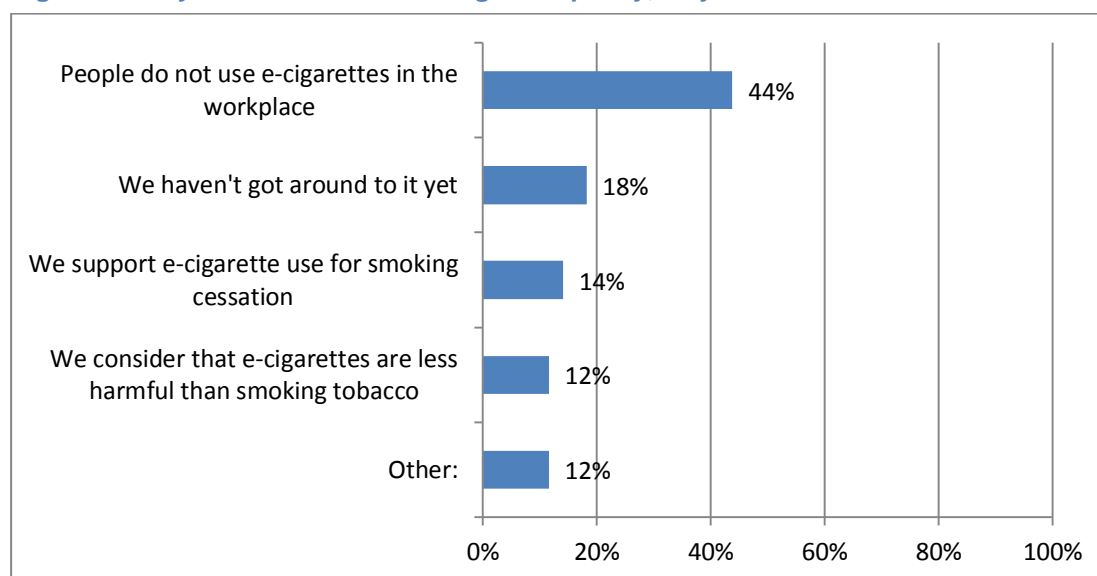


N=294 (SME = 213; Large = 81)

3.4 Reasons for not having an e-cigarette policy

Workplaces that did not have a policy or were not in the process of developing one were asked why this was. From a list of prompted answers, 44 per cent gave the reason that people do not use e-cigarettes in their workplace, while 18 per cent had not got around to developing a policy. Just over one in ten reported it was because they supported the use of e-cigarettes for smoking cessation, and that it was because they considered use of e-cigarettes as less harmful than smoking tobacco (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: If you do not have an e-cigarette policy, why is that?



N=121 (SME=112; Large=9).

SMEs and large employers are combined here given the small number of large employers that did not have a policy, or were not in the process of developing one.

Additional comments, most commonly from SMEs, mentioned that use of e-cigarettes was not an issue at work, or that none of their employees smoke tobacco or use e-cigarettes.

“We have no smokers employed at the [workplace] therefore I have not considered an e-cigarette policy.” **SME**

“None of our smoking staff use e-cigarettes so the issue has not arisen. If need be we would look to extend our no smoking policy.” **SME**

Other reasons given for not developing a policy included the difficulty in doing so when the employer operates in more than one country, and that a policy is not needed because e-cigarettes are treated the same as tobacco cigarettes.

Respondents also asked for clarity and guidance on the use of e-cigarettes:

“It would be helpful to have an All Wales position [...] the advice and guidance available to employers is often contradictory.” **SME**

“Current guidance from Public Health Wales, World Health Organization and ASH (Wales) is confusing in as much as the views expressed by each on benefits/harm to health differs considerably.”

Large employer

Some respondents were in favour of using e-cigarettes in terms of personal health benefits to the user. One respondent commented that staff using e-cigarettes in the workplace helped improved efficiency:

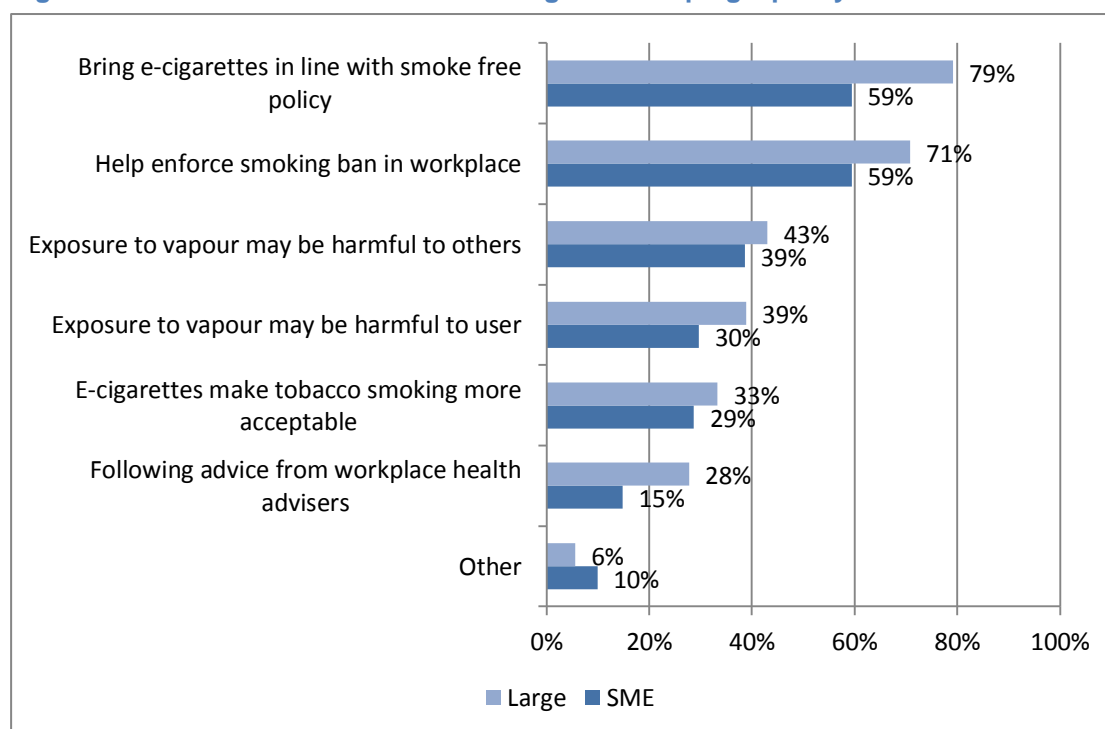
“All the users of e-cigarettes were all users of cigarettes [...] they have permission [to use e-cigarettes]. The amount of time saved from these employees not going outside has been significant.” **SME**

3.5 Reasons for having an e-cigarette policy

Workplaces that had an e-cigarette policy or were in the process of developing one were asked why this was. From a list of prompted answers, the most common reasons given were to bring e-cigarettes in line with existing smoke-free policy (79 per cent of large employers and 59 per cent of SMEs) and to help with enforcement of the smoking ban in the workplace (71 per cent of large employers and 59 per cent of SMEs).

Around one third of large employers and SMEs reported that it was because e-cigarettes make tobacco smoking more acceptable (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4: What are the reasons for having or developing a policy?



N=173 (SME=101; Large=72)

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could choose more than one answer.

Additional comments by respondents covered several reasons for having an e-cigarette policy, including responding to complaints from staff, maintaining a good public image, and following advice from fire officers:

“Following complaints from some workers we decided to restrict use of e-cigarettes. Also to maintain a good public image.” **SME**

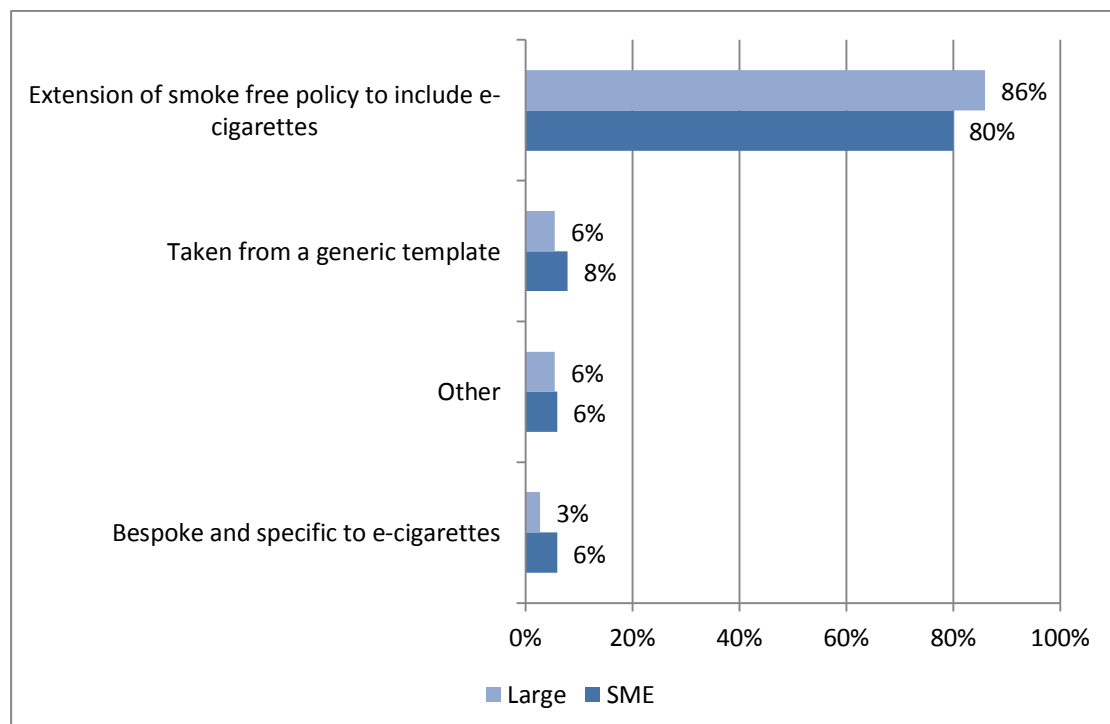
“Being a customer facing service then it may look like staff are smoking, it may also put customers off.” **SME**

“Fire Officers [had] concerns over the charging of e-cigarettes on premises.” **SME**

3.6 How e-cigarette policies were developed

Those workplaces that had an e-cigarette policy, or were developing one, were asked how it had been developed. As Figure 3.5 shows, the vast majority of the SMEs and large employers reported that their policies had been developed by extending their existing smoke-free policy (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5: How was your e-cigarette policy developed?



N=170 (SME=100; Large=70)

Additional comments showed that for some workplaces where the policy was still in development, they would benefit from guidance:

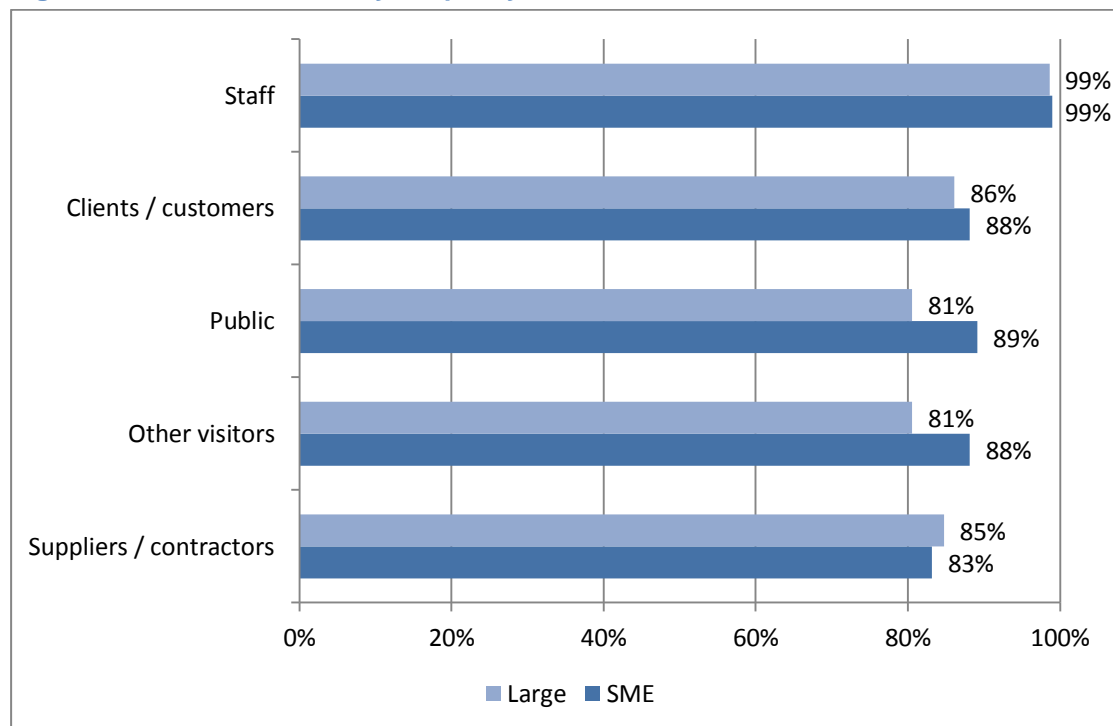
“We are awaiting guidance from the Health Board” **SME**

“We are currently still considering its formation and what it should include.” **SME**

3.7 Who the e-cigarette policies cover

Almost all e-cigarette workplace policies in existence and being developed among both the SMEs and large employers covered staff (99 per cent). Between eight and nine out of ten of the policies also covered clients/customers, the public, suppliers/contractors, and other visitors (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6: Who is covered by the policy?



N=173 (SME=101; Large=72)

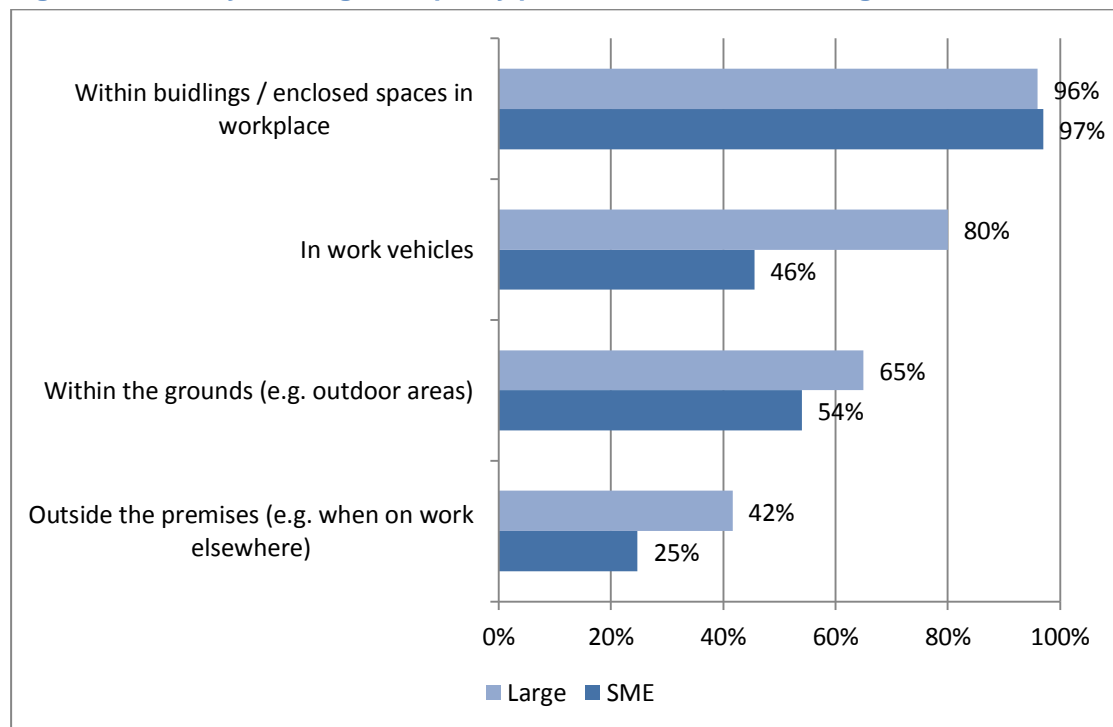
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could choose more than one answer.

3.8 Locations covered by e-cigarette policies

Almost all of the responding large employers and SMEs that had a policy, or were developing one, reported that their policies covered enclosed spaces and buildings within the workplace.

However, there were noticeable differences between SMEs and large employers regarding where else their policies applied. For example, eight out of ten of the large employers (80 per cent) reported that their policy applied in work vehicles, compared with less than half of SMEs (46 per cent), as Figure 3.7 shows.

Figure 3.7: Does your e-cigarette policy prohibit use in the following locations?



N=170 (SME=99; Large=71)

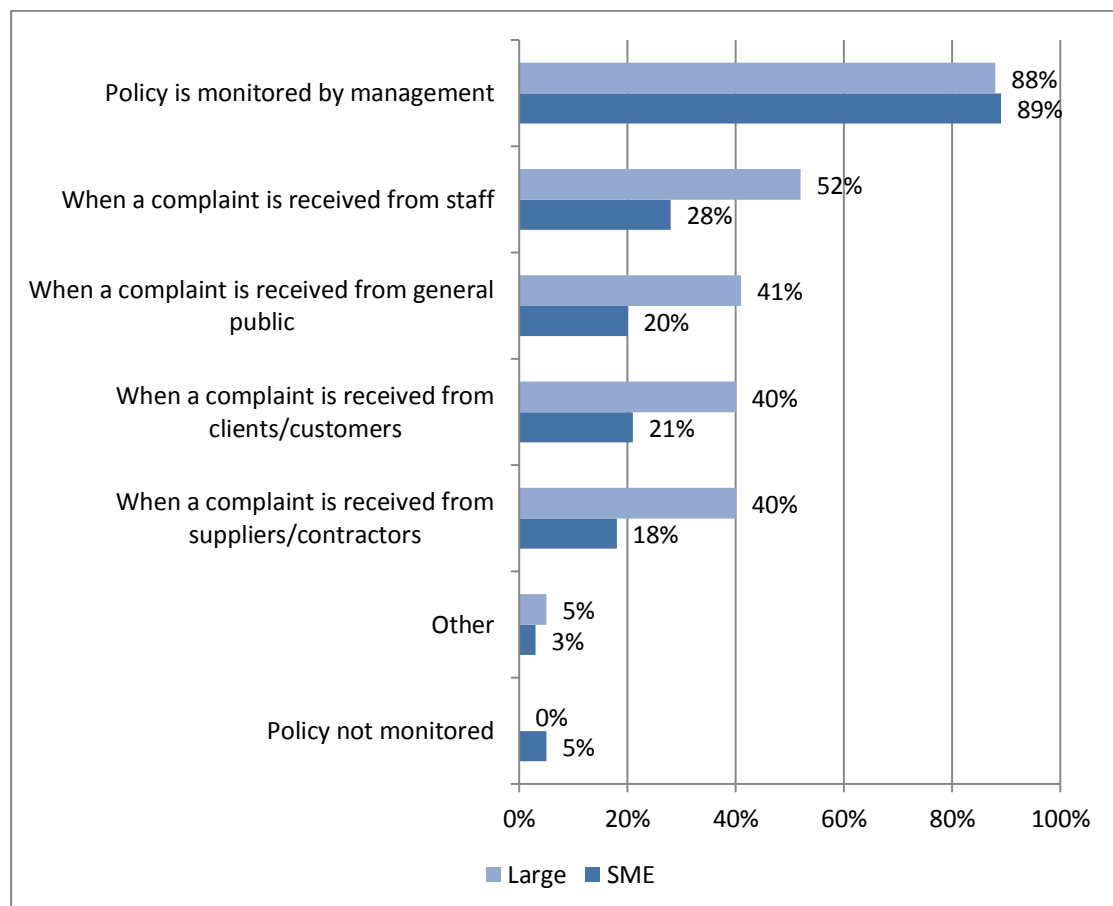
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could choose more than one answer.

3.9 How policy is monitored and enforced

For workplaces that had an e-cigarette policy, around nine out of ten of the large employers (88 per cent) and SMEs (89 per cent) reported that their policy was monitored by management, while half of the large employers (52 per cent) said it is enforced when a complaint is made by a member of staff – almost twice the proportion of SMEs (28 per cent).

Around four in ten of the large employers said their policy was enforced following a complaint from the general public, clients/customers or suppliers/contractors, compared with around one in five of the SMEs (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8: How do you monitor and enforce the policy?



N=134 (SME=76; Large=58)

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could choose more than one answer.

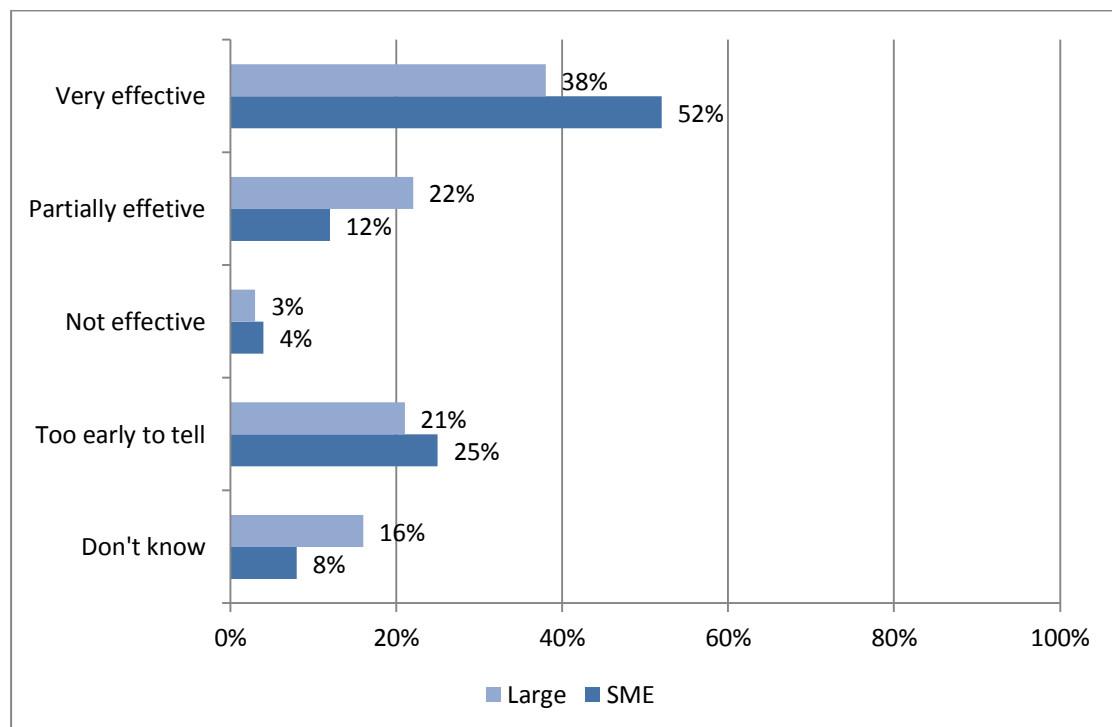
3.10 Perceived effectiveness of e-cigarette policies

Workplaces that already had a policy in place were asked how effective they thought it had been in prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes in the workplace.

Of the SMEs, around half (52 per cent) believed that their policy had been very effective, while around one in ten (12 per cent) thought it had been partially effective. Of the large employers, around four out of ten (38 per cent) believed that their policy had been very effective, while almost a quarter (22 per cent) thought it had been partially effective.

Around a fifth of the large employers (21 per cent) and a quarter of the SMEs (25 per cent) said it was too early to tell (Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.9: How effective has your policy been in prohibiting e-cigarette use?



N=135 (SME=77; Large=58)

Several additional comments were provided by respondents regarding the effectiveness of their e-cigarette policy, or how they have helped clear any confusion over their permitted use:

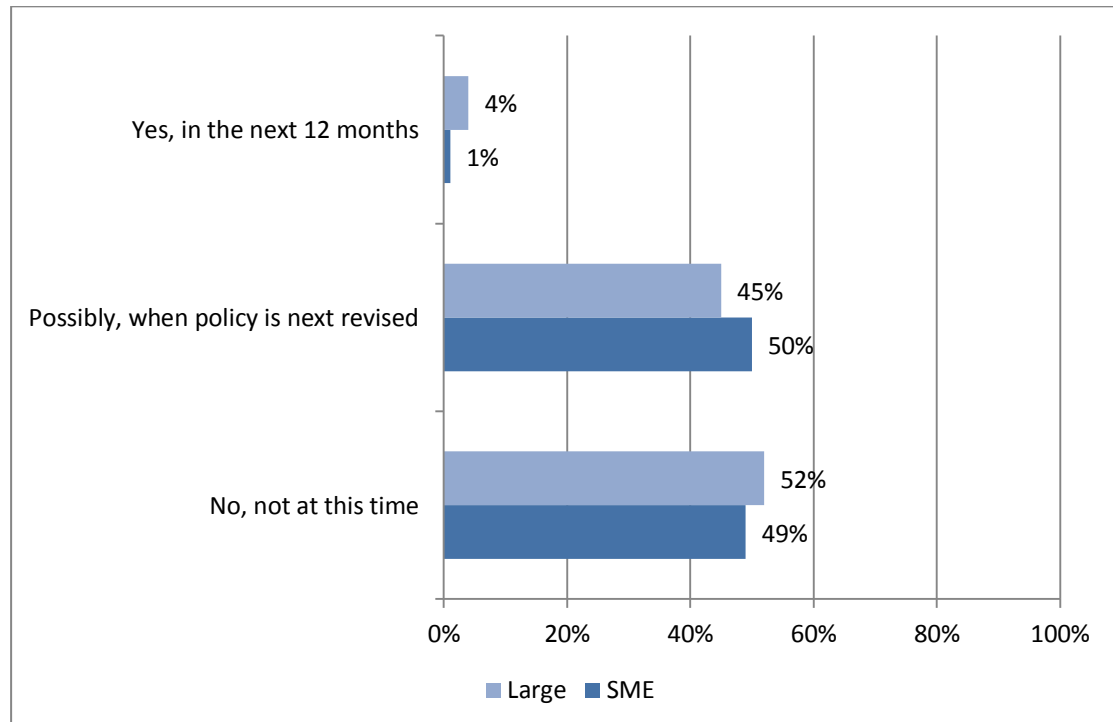
“We have had to develop separate signage, notifying staff, visitors, public etc. that e-cigarettes are not permitted as there has been much confusion over their use.” **Large employer**

“People simply don't smoke or use e-cigs in our premises anymore. Staff understand the policy and communicate it politely where necessary to visitors.” **SME**

3.11 Intentions to make changes to e-cigarette policies

Workplaces that already had an e-cigarette policy were asked if they intended to make any changes to it in the next 12 months. Similar results were reported for SMEs and large employers, with around half of each reporting that they had no intentions to make changes at this time, and very few reporting that they are planning to make changes in the next 12 months (Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.10: Do you intend to make any changes to your e-cigarette policy?



N=132 (SME=76; Large=56)

Reasons provided by those who were considering making changes when the policy is next revised included taking account of medical advice and any changes to legislation:

“If there is national guidance and updated research our policy could be amended to reflect this.” **Large employer**

“If the British Medical Association confirms that they are harmless to all then we may consider changing policy.” **SME**

3.12 Change made to the premises for e-cigarette users

All respondents were asked if any changes had been made to their workplace premises or environment specifically for e-cigarette users. Only three per cent of respondents (N=10) reported that changes had been made, with almost all of them supplying separate outdoor shelters for e-cigarette users:

“We are in the process of providing a designated shelter away from the smoking shelter for e-cig users.” **Large employer**

“[There is a] specific area within the canteen for the use of e-cigarettes.” **SME**

“Installed a vaping only shelter and extended current smoking area to also include vaping to allow choice for people.” **Large employer**

4. Discussion

This survey was designed to gauge the extent to which workplaces across Wales have implemented policies on e-cigarettes. However, a number of limitations need to be recognised. An online survey method was chosen given the limited time and resources available to undertake the research. However, response rates for online surveys tend to be lower than other survey methods, such as face-to-face or telephone interviewing⁹, and there is the potential for self-selection bias in the data received¹⁰. It would not be unreasonable to assume that respondents to this survey would be more likely to have an e-cigarette policy than other workplaces in Wales given the sampling frame used (i.e. healthy workplaces in Wales).

As responses were received from 20 per cent of the workplaces invited to take part in the survey, the findings can be said to relate to those workplaces that participated but are not necessarily representative of all workplaces involved in the HWW, CHS and SHW schemes. It is also important to note that when analysis is restricted to certain workplaces (for example, those that already have a policy in place), the sample size is small. Findings should therefore be interpreted with some caution.

Around half of the large employers that responded to the survey were aware of e-cigarettes currently being used on their premises compared with a quarter of SMEs. This difference in e-cigarette use in the workplaces of large employers and SMEs was reflected in the finding that nine out of ten of the large employers had a policy prohibiting e-cigarette use on their premises, or intending to have one, compared with less than half of the SMEs. The vast majority of the workplaces with a policy developed it by extending their existing smoke free policy to include e-cigarettes.

⁹ Manfreda, K.L. et al (2008). 'Web surveys versus other survey modes: A meta-analysis comparing response rates', *International Journal of Market Research*, 50: 79-104.

¹⁰ Bethlehem, J. (2010). 'Selection bias in web surveys', *International Statistical Review*, 78(2), 161-188.

The main reason given for not developing a policy – particularly among the SMEs – was that e-cigarettes were not used in the workplace and so it was not seen as an issue. A few respondents commented that allowing the use of e-cigarettes improved productivity of employees who would otherwise take cigarette breaks. However, given the conflicting messages around e-cigarettes, some commented that they would like clear guidance from public health bodies on the issue.

The main reason for having a policy, among both SMEs and large employers, was to bring e-cigarettes in line with the existing smoke-free policy and to help with its enforcement in the workplace. Normalisation of smoking appeared to be less of a concern, although ‘e-cigarettes make tobacco smoking more acceptable’ was still chosen as a reason for developing a policy by around three out of ten of the responding workplaces. Maintaining a good public image, and responding to complaints from staff, were also provided as reasons for developing a policy.

Some respondents who reported to be currently developing an e-cigarette policy also requested further guidance on what such a policy should contain – raising similar questions as those who had not developed a policy. This may therefore be an opportunity for workplace health advisers to engage and support workplaces in decisions around developing e-cigarette policies.

Nearly half of workplaces with an e-cigarette policy felt that it had been very effective, with around a quarter saying it was too early to tell. Undertaking similar research in the future could help capture the perceived effectiveness of the policies over a longer period of time. Even so, some respondents – mostly public facing organisations – commented that the policy has already helped clear up confusion among visitors and members of the public over the permitted use of e-cigarettes on their premises.

Finally, the findings suggest that the introduction of e-cigarette policies has not led to many employers making changes to their workplace to accommodate this. Only 10 of the respondents reported making changes to

the workplace premises, with most supplying outdoor shelters for e-cigarette users.

Future monitoring of the implementation of e-cigarette policies in workplaces may be valuable to policy makers, and a repeat of the survey would provide the opportunity to assess changes over time, and to capture a more representative picture of workplaces across Wales. With additional resources and time available, data quality could be improved. For example, other methods of data collection could be employed, the survey could be opened over a longer period of time to encourage higher response rates, and a more comprehensive sampling frame could be used.

Annex A: Survey questions

This is a short survey relating to policies on e-cigarettes which should take around 5 minutes to complete.

Definition of Electronic cigarettes: e-cigarettes are devices whose function is to vaporise and deliver to the lungs of the user a chemical mixture typically composed of nicotine, propylene glycol and other chemicals, although some products claim to contain no nicotine. There are various distinct styles of e-cigarettes in circulation. Some are designed to look like their conventional (tobacco) counterparts (e.g. cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, pipes, hookahs or shishas), while others have been described as looking similar to pens.

- Q1 Are you aware of e-cigarettes being used on your premises?
- Yes, currently being used
- No, but they have been used previously
- No, they have never been used.....

- Q2 Do you have a policy prohibiting e-cigarette use in the workplace?
- Yes, a specific policy for e-cigarettes Go to Q4
- Yes, as an extension to the existing smoke-free policy Go to Q4
- No, but in the process of developing one Go to Q4
- No, it has not been considered Go to Q3
- No, we have decided not to implement an e-cigarette policy..... Go to Q3
- Choose one answer only

- Q3 If you do not have such an e-cigarette policy, why is that?
- (Choose all that apply)
- People do not use e-cigarettes in the workplace
- We consider that e-cigarettes are less harmful than smoking tobacco
- We support e-cigarette use for smoking cessation.....
- We haven't got around to it yet.....
- Other:

- Q3 Please specify _____
- Choose all that apply
- Go to Q11

- Q4 What are the reasons for having or developing a policy?
- (Choose all that apply)
- To help enforcement of the smoking ban in the workplace
- We consider that e-cigarettes may be harmful to the user
- We consider that exposure to e-cigarette vapour may be harmful to others .
- We consider that e-cigarettes will make smoking tobacco more acceptable
- To bring e-cigarettes in line with existing smoke-free policy.....
- Following advice from workplace health advisers or others
- Other:

Please specify

- Q5 How was your e-cigarette policy developed?
- It has been taken from a generic template
 - It is bespoke, specific to e-cigarettes.....
 - We have extended our smoke-free policy to include e-cigarettes
 - Other:
- Please specify

- Q6 Who is covered in the policy?
(Choose all that apply)
- Staff
 - Suppliers/contractors.....
 - Clients/customers
 - Public
 - Other visitors

- Q7 Does your e-cigarette policy prohibit use in the following locations?
(Choose all that apply)
- Within buildings/enclosed spaces of the workplace.....
 - Within the business grounds (eg. outdoor areas)
 - Outside of business premises or grounds (eg when on work business elsewhere).....
 - In work vehicles.....

- Q8 How do you monitor/enforce the policy?
(Choose all that apply)
- The policy is monitored by management
 - When a complaint is received by staff
 - When a complaint is received from suppliers/contractors
 - When a complaint is received from clients/customers
 - When a complaint is received by the general public.....
 - The policy is not monitored/enforced.....
 - Other
- Please specify

- Q9 On reflection, how effective has your e-cigarette policy been in prohibiting e-cigarette use?
- Very effective.....
 - Partially effective
 - Not effective
 - Too early to tell.....

Don't know.....
Please explain why that is _____

Q10 Do you intend to make any changes/amendments to your e-cigarette policy?
Yes, in the next 12 months.....
Possibly, when policy is next revised
No, not at this time
If Yes, what changes do you
intend to make? _____

Q11 Have you made any changes to the premises/environment specifically for e-
cigarette users? (For example, providing a separate vaping shelter for e-
cigarette users)
Yes
No.....
If Yes, what changes have you
made? _____

Q12 Are staff allowed to charge their e-cigarettes at work?
Yes
No.....
Don't know.....

Q13 What is your type of work?
Private sector (health related)
Private sector (non-health)
Public sector (health related).....
Public sector (non-health)
Voluntary/third sector (health related)
Voluntary/third sector (non-health)
Other sector.....
Please specify _____

Q14 Do you have a Corporate Health Standard (CHS) / Small Workplace Health
Award or working towards one?
Engaged in the Healthy Working Wales network of employers

- Working towards level of award.....
- Achieved Bronze
- Achieved Silver.....
- Achieved Gold
- Achieved Platinum (CHS only)
- No.....

- Q15 Number of Employees?
- 0-9
 - 10-49
 - 50-249
 - 250-499
 - 500+

- Q16 What local authority(s) are you based in?
- Blaenau Gwent
 - Bridgend
 - Caerphilly
 - Cardiff
 - Carmarthenshire
 - Ceredigion.....
 - Conwy
 - Denbighshire.....
 - Flintshire
 - Gwynedd.....
 - Isle of Anglesey
 - Merthyr Tydfil
 - Monmouthshire.....
 - Neath Port Talbot.....
 - Newport
 - Pembrokeshire
 - Powys
 - Rhondda Cynon Taff.....
 - Swansea
 - The Vale of Glamorgan
 - Torfaen
 - Wrexham

- Q17 Are there any other comments you would like to make?
-
-
-

Annex B: Responses by local authority

Table B.1: What local authority(s) are you based in?

Local Authority	Number of survey responses
Rhondda Cynon Taff	51
Cardiff	50
Caerphilly	36
Wrexham	31
Bridgend	28
Merthyr Tydfil	27
Swansea	25
Newport	23
Gwynedd	19
Denbighshire	18
Flintshire	18
Torfaen	17
Vale of Glamorgan	17
Carmarthenshire	13
Conwy	12
Isle of Anglesey	12
Monmouthshire	12
Neath Port Talbot	12
Blaenau Gwent	10
Ceredigion	9
Pembrokeshire	8
Powys	8
WALES	295
Response rate	20%