Title: A pilot study of the acceptability of snus and nicotine pouch in smoking cessation

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Body: New Zealand is aiming to become entirely smokefree by 2025. This goal is endorsed by the Ministry of Health and widely by the tobacco control community. To achieve this goal will require a number of new initiatives both in policy and smoking cessation. We have recently commenced a small pilot study to examine the acceptability of snus (an oral tobacco) and a nicotine pouch (Zonnic) amongst hospitalised smokers who have previously tried and failed to quit with NRT. 100 hospitalised smokers who wished to quit were enrolled and have been followed for at least 3 months. Smokers were given 1 week to try both products and then chose one to use for three months in a further quit attempt. During the first weeks' trial the nicotine pouch was more satisfying (using the CES) than snus median score 4.0 (IQR 2-5), 4 (IQR 3-5) p=0.05 and more enjoyable 4.0 (IQR 3-5), 3.0 (IQR 1-4) p<0.01, respectively. During the 2 weeks prior to quitting 50 subjects chose to use the nicotine pouch, 25 chose snus and 25 chose to use neither, except occasionally. At 3 months, of the 16 who used snus regularly 5 were quit (31%) and a further 3 had smoked less than 2 cigarettes in the last 7 days. Of the 24 who used the nicotine pouch 4 were quit (16.6%) and a further 2 subjects had smoked less than 2 cigarettes. Amongst smokers with no history of oral tobacco use, the nicotine pouch appears more satisfying and enjoyable and is chosen twice as often as snus, but may be less effective for cessation. Alternatively, those who choose snus may be better able to quit than those who choose zonnic. A full RCT will be required to confirm these findings. (This study was funded entirely by the New Zealand Ministry of Health).