



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
30 NOVEMBER 2016**

HSA SEIZES \$50,000 WORTH OF VAPORISERS IN SERANGOON NORTH RAID

The Health Sciences Authority's (HSA) Tobacco Regulation Branch raided two premises located in the vicinity of Serangoon North on 25 November 2016 and seized an estimated \$50,000 worth of vaporisers. The suspect, a 30-year-old male Singaporean, had stored the vaporisers at his house and another nearby storage area. Please refer to [Annex A](#) for the photos of the products seized.

2 The suspect's peddling of vaporisers was identified through HSA's online surveillance and investigation. HSA officers retrieved transaction records which revealed that the suspect had sold \$30,000 worth of vaporisers and vaporiser accessories on seven online platforms. This is HSA's largest raid to date in terms of seizure value and the scale of the peddler's business. He is currently assisting with investigations.

3 The raid is part of ongoing efforts by HSA to deter the illegal peddling of vaporisers in Singapore. From 2011 to date, HSA has prosecuted 13 persons for selling such products. The stiffest penalty meted out so far was \$64,500 for the illegal sales of vaporisers.

Vaporisers are strictly prohibited in Singapore

4 HSA would like to remind the public that section 16 of the Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act, prohibits the import, distribution, sale or offer for sale of any article that is designed to resemble a tobacco product, that is capable of being smoked, that may be used in such a way as to mimic the act of smoking or the packaging of which resembles the packaging commonly associated with tobacco products; this includes vaporisers such as e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-cigars and the like.

5 Any person who is convicted of an offence under section 16 is liable to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for up to 6 months or to both for the first offence and a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or to imprisonment for up to 12 months or to both for the second or subsequent offence. Information pertaining to the prohibition of vaporisers in Singapore is available on HSA's [website](#).

6 The Authority will not hesitate to prosecute anyone who imports, distributes, offer for sale or sell vaporisers in Singapore. The public should also refrain from using vaporisers and discard any vaporisers they have in possession.

7 HSA encourages members of the public who have information on the illegal importation, distribution or sales of vaporisers to call its Tobacco Regulation Branch at Tel: 6684 2036 or 6684 2037 during office hours (9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday) or email hsa_trb@hsa.gov.sg.

Dangers of Vaporisers

8 Despite claims by manufacturers, there is no conclusive scientific evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of vaporisers in helping smokers quit tobacco use. Instead, such products are likely to lead to nicotine addiction among users, and may also encourage experimentation with other forms of tobacco, in turn leading to chronic diseases and premature death. The World Health Organization (WHO) has also called on marketers of e-cigarettes to immediately stop the unproven claims on vaporisers.

9 The Ministry of Health, Health Promotion Board and HSA are concerned that vaporisers could potentially be a gateway to developing a smoking habit, particularly among the young. Smoking is known to increase the risks of chronic diseases and other health conditions, and is a major preventable cause of death.

10 The WHO warned that the use of vaporisers could trigger heart attack, stroke and hypertension. In a report in 2014, the WHO stated that vaporisers contain cancer-causing agents and toxicants, and in some cases, as much as those in conventional cigarettes. In addition, a study conducted by HSA in 2011 also found poor correlation between the actual nicotine content and the labelled amount among different vaporiser products. Vaporisers containing nicotine can cause adverse effects during pregnancy, contribute to cardiovascular disease, promote the growth of tumours and lead to fatal and debilitating conditions.

11 Individuals seeking to quit smoking with the assistance of pharmacotherapy should use a regulated and licensed nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) product or other non-nicotine medications under proper medical supervision. NRTs, when used in conjunction with counselling, could be effective in helping individuals quit smoking in the long run. Advice and support on smoking cessation is available through the toll-free Quitline at 1800 438 2000 or the iQuit club at www.hpb.gov.sg/iquit.

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About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services

and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety. HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/>.

For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/HSAsg.

About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

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Photographs of the seized products





