Electronic Cigarettes: A Perspective for the Primary Care Physician

Accreditation
The Southern Medical Association is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Southern Medical Association designates this Journal-Based CME Activity for a maximum of 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Goal
The goal of this activity is to inform physicians about patients’ use of e-cigarettes as an aid in smoking cessation, outlining the risk and benefits of their use.

Objectives
Upon completion of this activity, participants should be more competent to:
- Understand the use of electronic cigarettes in smoking cessation efforts
- Identify the potential risks and benefits of using electronic cigarettes
- Cite the best data available for physician counseling of patients in the use of electronic cigarettes

Target Audience and Scope of Practice
Southern Medical Journal is an interdisciplinary, multi-specialty Journal, and articles span the spectrum of medical topics, providing timely, up-to-date information for primary care physicians and specialists alike. The SMJ enables physicians to provide the best possible care to patients in this age of rapidly changing modern medicine. Therefore, the readers of the SMJ are an appropriate target for CME articles.

Financial Disclosure Information
Authors
Gina M. Simoncini, MD – No relevant financial relationships to disclose
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The Authors do not include a discussion of a commercial product with an unlabeled use or an investigational use not yet approved by the FDA.

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Part 1 - Test. Check the Correct Answer. You must score 80% to pass.

Clinical Scenario:
As a physician with a busy practice, you have noted an increase in the number of patients who are inquiring about the potential benefits of electronic cigarettes for their own use or use by family members. Most of the inquiries are related to smoking cessation efforts, but also about the appropriateness of their use in young persons. There seems to be very little information in the public domain that is of assistance to your patients, so you undertake a medical literature search to learn what you can about the available research data on the subject. You wish to have as much information as possible for your patients when you discuss the use of electronic cigarettes with them. You identify an article in the October, 2014 issue of the Southern Medical Journal by Simoncini and associates that addresses the very topic of your interest. You read it thoroughly to glean clinically helpful information to pass on to your patients.

1. Which of the following is/are (a) true statement(s) regarding cigarette smoking in the US?
   A. ☐ An estimated 19% of all American adults smoke cigarettes
   B. ☐ Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable deaths
   C. ☐ Smoking cessation is known to rapidly reduce smoking’s associated health risks
   D. ☐ All of the above

2. e-Cigarettes are battery-operated devices that vaporize a liquid solution, within which nicotine or other aromas and humectants may be dissolved.
   A. ☐ True
   B. ☐ False

3. The Simoncini article cites the only randomized clinical trial by Bullen and associates in New Zealand comparing the use of nicotine-containing e-cigarettes to the nicotine patch. Which of the following was a major conclusion by the Bullen study?
   A. ☐ Nicotine patch was more effective than e-cigarettes in achieving 6 month abstinence
   B. ☐ e-Cigarettes were more effective than nicotine patch in achieving 6 month abstinence
   C. ☐ Neither group was able to achieve 6 month abstinence in the subjects
   D. ☐ There were no differences among users of nicotine patches, e-cigarettes, or e-cigarettes without nicotine in achieving 6 month abstinence.

4. Although e-cigarettes do not contain any tobacco, they are still subject to US tobacco laws and cannot be purchased without proof of age in almost all states.
   A. ☐ True
   B. ☐ False

5. Which of the following are true statements, according to the Simoncini article, regarding the current status of e-cigarettes in the US?
   A. ☐ The use of e-cigarettes helps in reducing the numbers of cigarettes smoked
   B. ☐ Continued health risks persist for dual users of e-cigarettes and cigarettes or nicotine patches
   C. ☐ Concerns exist for the use of e-cigarettes by minors
   D. ☐ All of the above
Part 2 – Evaluation/Learner Directed Phase. Must be Completed to Obtain CME Credit.

What is your overall rating for this activity?
☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Fair  ☐ Poor

Rate the Faculty/Author selection and effectiveness
☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Fair  ☐ Poor

Rate the practical application of this content to your practice
☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Fair  ☐ Poor

Did this activity meet its stated educational objectives?
☐ Yes  ☐ No

Did you perceive industry/commercial bias in this activity?
☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes to industry/commercial bias, explain: ________________________________________________________________

What barriers do you face in your current practice setting that may impact patient outcomes? (Check all that apply)
☐ Lack of evidence-based guidelines
☐ Lack of applicability of guidelines to my current practice/patients
☐ Lack of time
☐ Organizational/Institutional restraints
☐ Insurance/financial rules or regulations
☐ Patient adherence/compliance
☐ Treatment related adverse events
☐ Government-mandated regulations
☐ Other (describe): ______________________________________________________________

As a result of my participation in this activity, I have developed new strategies and I plan to make the following changes to my practice (check all that apply):
☐ Modify treatment plans
☐ Change my screening and prevention practice
☐ Incorporate different diagnosis strategies into patient evaluation
☐ Use alternative communication methodologies with patients and families
☐ Implement new documentation procedures to improve efficiency and accuracy of business practice
☐ Use systems-based resources for improved quality of care
☐ Improve the structure and operations of my practice to address healthcare reform, cost containment and other regulatory issues
☐ None - this activity validated current practices
☐ Other (describe): ______________________________________________________________

From your perspective, describe at least one observation related to the content (ie, did you agree or disagree – if so, why? Were some points debatable or controversial – if yes, what? Did you have an epiphany? – if yes, describe)

___________________________________________________________________________________________

General comments about this activity: ______________________________________________________________
Part 3 – Attestation, Request for CME Credit, and Payment

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I attest that I have read/reviewed the activity material and completed the self-assessment test as directed.

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