



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
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TWO ONLINE PEDDLERS CONVICTED AND FINED A TOTAL OF \$31,000 FOR ILLEGAL SALE OF E-CIGARETTES

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) prosecuted two men on 20 August 2015 for the illegal online sale of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). Both peddlers were convicted in Court and fined a total of \$31,000.

2 The two male peddlers, Chue Kar Fatt Francis, aged 34, and his friend, Zhang Zhaoming, aged 32, were fined sums of \$16,000 and \$15,000 respectively. They purchased the e-cigarettes illegally from overseas suppliers in Thailand and the United States for sale locally, on two websites.

3 Chue and his wife, Rattikan Khamtong, were first caught by HSA for selling e-cigarettes online. Despite this, Chue persisted in helping his friend, Zhang to set up another website to sell the illegal products. E-cigarettes with an estimated street value of around \$20,000 in total were seized from the peddlers during the raids. Rattikan, 30, who was also charged in Court failed to turn up for the court hearing. She has reportedly left the country and a Warrant of Arrest has been issued.

4 Chue and Rattikan were also charged for obstructing HSA's investigations by deleting related online evidence of their offences.

5 The two websites that were managed by the peddlers to sell the e-cigarettes have been shut down. These cases were detected through HSA's online surveillance and enforcement activities, which are targeted at deterring the illegal trade of e-cigarettes in Singapore. From 2011 to date, HSA has prosecuted ten persons for selling e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes are strictly prohibited in Singapore

6 HSA would like to remind the public that section 16 of the Tobacco (Control of Advertisement and Sales) Act prohibits the import, distribution, sale or offer for sale of any article that is designed to resemble a tobacco product; this includes vaporisers such as e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-cigars and the likes.

7 Any person who is convicted of an offence under section 16 is liable to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 for the first offence and a fine not exceeding \$10,000 for the second or subsequent offence for each count of the offence. Any e-cigarettes imported will be seized and confiscated. Information pertaining to the prohibition of e-cigarettes in Singapore is available on HSA's [website](#).

8 The public is strongly advised not to purchase or bring e-cigarettes into Singapore. The public should also refrain from using e-cigarettes and discard any e-cigarettes they have in possession.

9 HSA encourages members of the public who have information on the illegal sales of e-cigarettes to call its Tobacco Regulation Branch at Tel: 66842036 or 66842037 during office hours (9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday).

Dangers of E-cigarettes

10 Despite claims by manufacturers, there is no conclusive scientific evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of e-cigarettes 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 e-cigarettes.

11 The Ministry of Health, Health Promotion Board and HSA are concerned that e-cigarettes 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.

12 The WHO warned that the use of e-cigarettes 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 e-cigarette products. E-cigarettes contain pure nicotine that can cause adverse effects during pregnancy, contribute to cardiovascular disease, promote the growth of tumours and lead to fatal and debilitating conditions.

13 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.iquitclub.sg.

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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.