

1. Background

- Harm reduction such as long-term use of less harmful nicotine products could reduce the high rates of tobacco-related disease among People Living with HIV (PLHIV)
- This study aimed to elicit acceptability of different nicotine products, including new vaporized nicotine products (e.g. e-cigarettes) for short-term or long-term use.

2. Methods

- We showed participants demonstrations of standard nicotine products (gum; patch; mouth spray; oral strip; inhalator) and vaporized products (two different tank style vaporisers).
- Participants completed a brief questionnaire, then selected up to two standard nicotine products and up to two vaporised nicotine products with their choice of e-liquid (18mg/mL nicotine or nicotine-free in 50:50 propylene glycol/vegetable glycerol mixture +/- menthol).
- One product was sent out per week with instructions and a demonstration video on how to use it.
- Participants recorded their use in a product diary and received weekly phone calls from the research team.
- After all products had been tried, participants attended a final face-to-face interview where product diaries and any unused products were collected.
- We discussed the participants' experiences of using the products using a semi-structured questionnaire. These qualitative data were recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically.

3. Participants – Baseline


- Eleven participants attended the demonstration session and completed the baseline questionnaire
- One participant was lost to follow-up after week 1

Demographics		N (%)
Male		10 (90.9)
Age	Median	46
	Range	28-51

Time since last quit attempt	N (%)
In last 6 months	3 (27.3)
6-12 months ago	3 (27.3)
1-2 years ago	3 (27.3)
>2 years ago	2 (18.2)

Prior NRT use	N (%)
Gum	6 (54.5)
Mouth spray	2 (18.2)
Patch	9 (75.0)
Dissolvable strip	1 (9.1)
Inhalator	2 (18.2)
Other	3 (27.3)

4. Results




Gum (N=1)

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- Liked it
- Keeps you occupied
- Can imagine using long-term

Adverse effects: Mouth ulcer



Patch (N=2)


+

- Effective

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- Didn't like it
- Can't use for too long

Adverse effects: Sore arm if left on too long



Inhalator (N=6)


+

- Effective
- Liked it
- Convenient
- Satisfied 'hand to mouth'
- Good for travelling

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- Not effective
- Won't use again
- Disappointing
- Didn't give same 'fix' as cigarette
- Takes some getting used to
- No taste satisfaction

Adverse effects: Sore throat/mouth, affected taste of food, cough, insomnia, nausea



CoolFire IV (N=8)


+

- Effective
- Liked it
- Helped cut down
- Satisfied 'hand to mouth'
- Can imagine using long-term
- Felt marked improvement in lung function

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- Didn't like it
- Disappointing
- Too big and heavy
- Felt like medical equipment
- Unpleasant taste (unflavoured e-liquid)
- Not satisfactory
- Couldn't replace cigarettes
- Experience was like smoking ice
- Vapour was harsh

Adverse effects: Cough




iTaste VV4.0 (N=8)

+

- Effective
- Liked it
- Satisfied 'hand to mouth'
- Can imagine using long-term
- One of the better products available

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- Underwhelmed
- Too big and heavy
- Didn't fit in pocket
- Not stylish enough
- Reminded of hookah
- Still wanted a cigarette
- Frustrated that it wasn't satisfactory
- Couldn't replace cigarettes



Mouth spray (N=7)

+

- Effective
- Liked it
- Easy to use
- Helped cut down
- Can imagine using long term

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- Not effective
- Didn't like it
- Bad taste
- Too strong
- Didn't satisfy 'hand to mouth'

Adverse effects: Sore throat/mouth, affected taste of food, hiccups, palpitations, nausea



Dissolvable oral strip (N=6)

+

- Effective
- Quick effect
- Liked it
- Superior product
- Discreet
- Will use again

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- Pack difficult to open
- Disappointing
- Takes some practice
- Quickly lost effectiveness once dissolved
- Still wanted a cigarette
- Stuck to side of mouth

“This definitely satisfies the hand-to-mouth aspect of smoking”

“When I used the iTaste it felt too much like you were smoking ice”

Participant reactions to vaporised nicotine products

“My family's negative comments about my Cool Fire made me question whether or not this product is for me”

“The iTaste just reminds me too much of medical equipment”

“Takes some getting used to but is very effective”

“I'm nervous to use my e-cigarette outside of the house”

5. Conclusions

- There were mixed responses to all products tested. Some participants preferred standard products over vaporised products and *vice versa*.
- Participants reported more side effects with standard nicotine products than with vaporised products.
- A number of factors influenced acceptability including nicotine delivery (satisfaction/effectiveness), taste, convenience, and social acceptability.
- The results suggest there are a number of barriers to overcome to make tank style vaporisers acceptable for some PLHIV to use them, especially in public.

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