

Summer Studentships 2026/2027

PROJECT TITLE:

Reasons for vaping among youth and young adults in Aotearoa

AIM:

Identify factors associated with uptake and maintenance of vaping among youth and young adults in Aotearoa New Zealand.

METHODS:

In 2025 the International Tobacco Control Youth Tobacco Survey was conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand. Over 2,200 participants aged 15 to 29 years old were recruited. Those that reported vaping in the past 30 days were asked about their reasons for vaping, including whether they vaped because they were addicted, to stop smoking, to deal with stress or anxiety, for the flavours, and/or because it was cheaper than smoking. This study will explore factors associated with vaping among youth (participants aged 15 to 19) and young adults (participants aged 20 to 29) in the context of the current policy environment in Aotearoa New Zealand. Further detail on the study is at:

<https://davidhammond.ca/projects/tobacco-vaping/itc-youth-tobacco-ecig/>.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE:

Aotearoa New Zealand has an extremely high rate of vaping among youth and young adults compared to other countries. In 2024/25 around a quarter of 18- to 24-year-olds reported vaping daily (New Zealand Health Survey). This is despite recent initiatives to reduce rates of vaping among youth, including a ban of cartoons on packaging, limited flavour descriptions, and limits on nicotine content. It is essential to understand why youth and young adults are vaping in order implement effective interventions to reduce the uptake of vaping and encourage cessation.

STUDENT'S ROLE AND EXPOSURE TO SCIENTIFIC METHOD:

Review the current policy affecting vaping in Aotearoa New Zealand, working with project supervisors to develop an analysis plan to assess factors associated with vaping among youth and young adults in Aotearoa New Zealand using data from the 2025 International Tobacco Control Youth Tobacco Survey, analyse the data using R, and prepare an initial draft manuscript for journal submission.

RELEVANT PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS (Education or Research):

Experience with R or similar.

Main supervisor:	Andrew Waa
Email address:	Andrew.waa@otago.ac.nz
Other Supervisor/s:	James Stanley Richard Edwards

Host Department:	Public Health, Wellington	
Location:	Wellington	
	Can students work remotely?	Yes