

# y-Quit Vaping: Exploring the vaping habits of Australian youth at risk of psychosis

E Draper<sup>1</sup>, L Conlon<sup>1</sup>, A Watkins<sup>1</sup>, B McGuigan<sup>2</sup>, W Morrow<sup>2</sup>, C O'Donnell<sup>1</sup>, J Curtis<sup>1,2,3</sup>, H Fibbins<sup>1,2</sup>

1. Mindgardens Neuroscience Network, Sydney, Australia  
2. South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, Sydney, Australia  
3. School of Clinical Medicine, UNSW, Sydney, Australia

## BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE

Vaping prevalence among the general population of Australian youth is rapidly increasing<sub>1</sub>



48% of Australian youth at risk of psychosis smoke (a rate 6x higher than peers in the general population)<sub>2</sub>



This demographic is susceptible to high vaping rates.

Smoking-related diseases are the **leading cause** of premature mortality among people with severe mental illness<sub>3</sub>



10-15 years reduced life expectancy

## AIMS

To examine vaping prevalence and explore experiences of vaping among youth aged 16-25 with psychosis or at-risk mental states accessing a large metropolitan Sydney public mental health service.

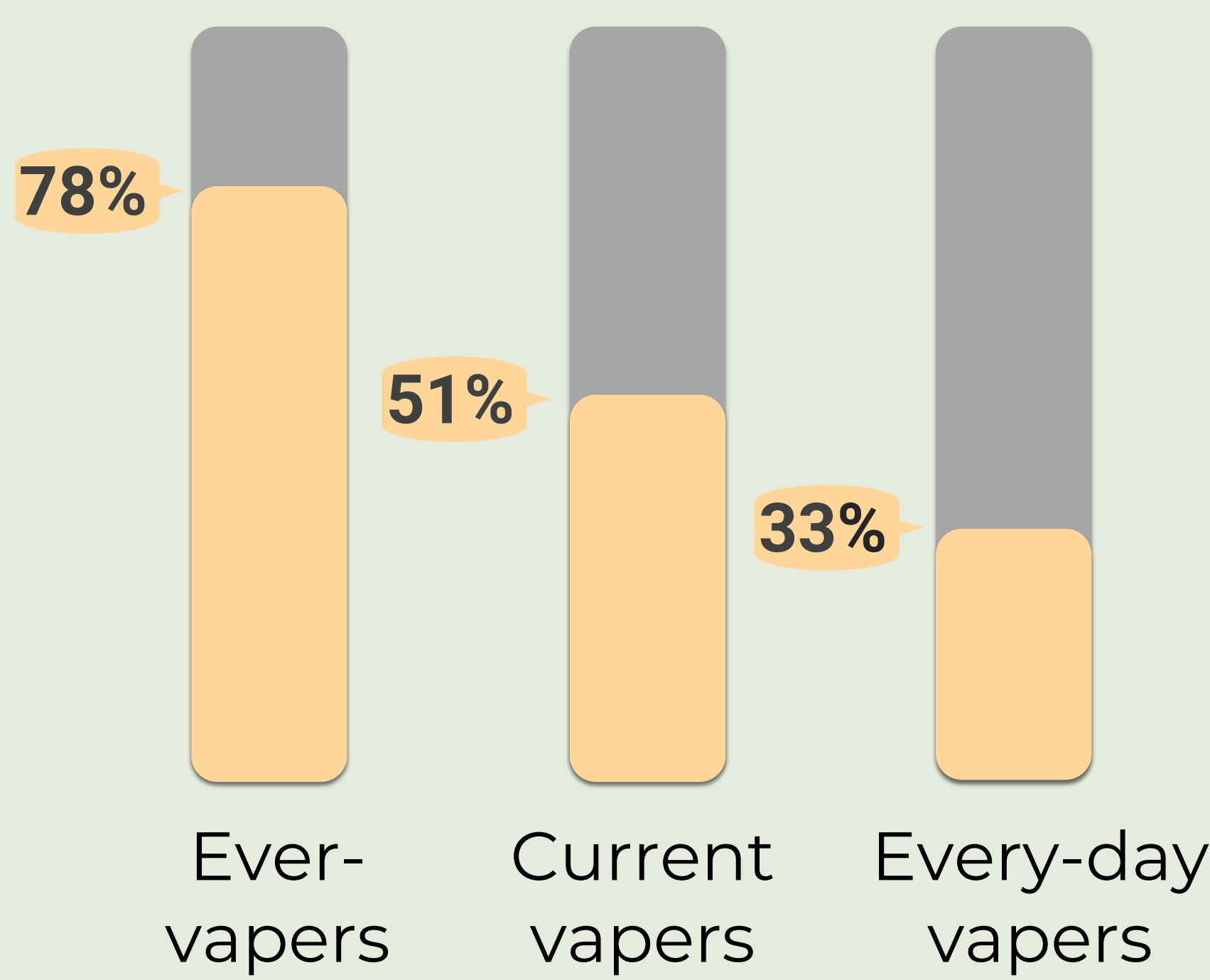
## METHODS

1. Retrospective chart audit on surveys conducted with 102 youth aged 16 – 25 yrs accessing the mental health service between August 2024 and June 2025.

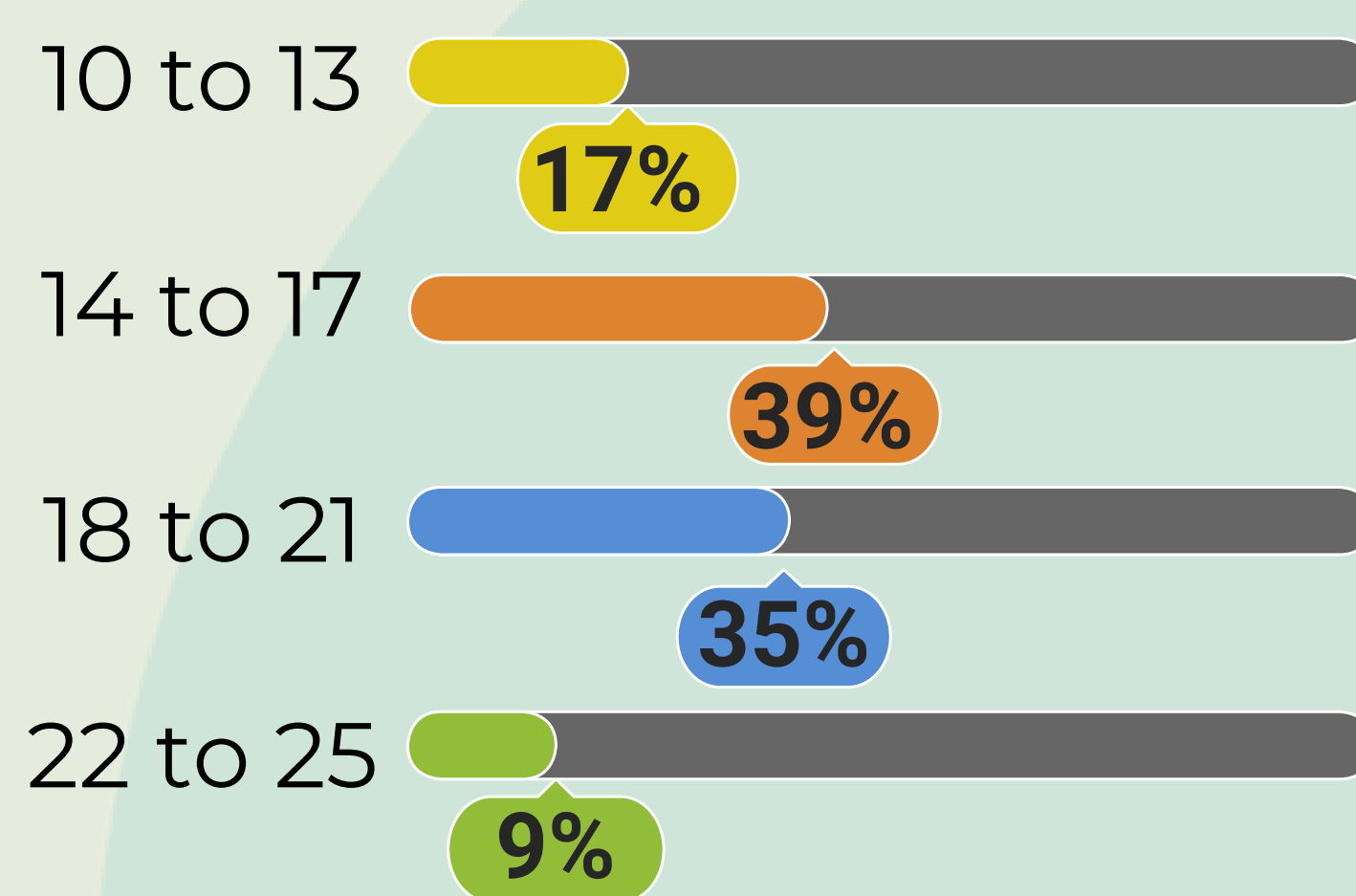
2. Thematic analysis of qualitative interviews with 18 survey completers.

## RESULTS

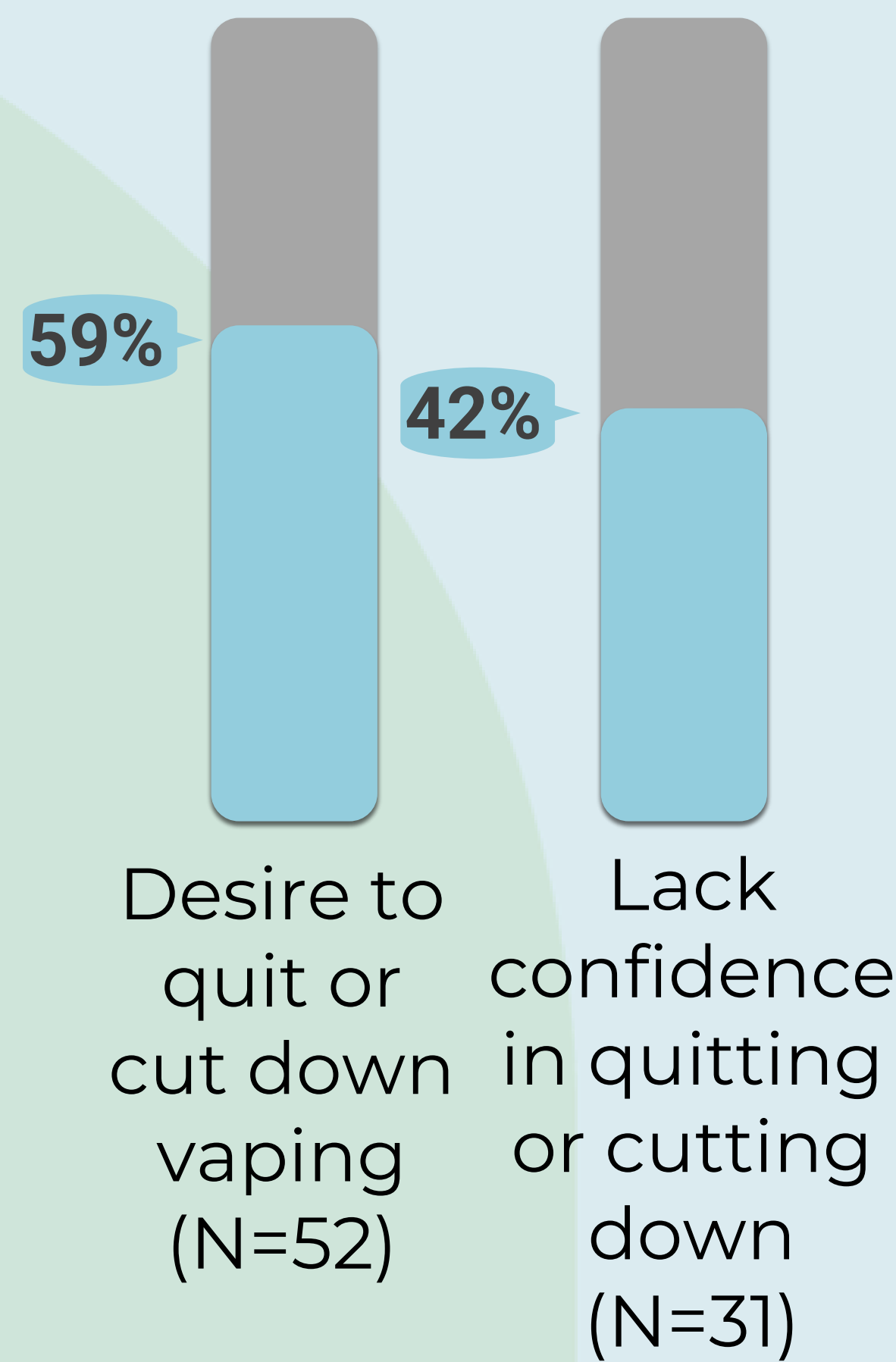
### Vaping status (N=102)



### Age tried vaping (n=77)



### Quitting / cutting down



### Thematic Analysis (n=18)

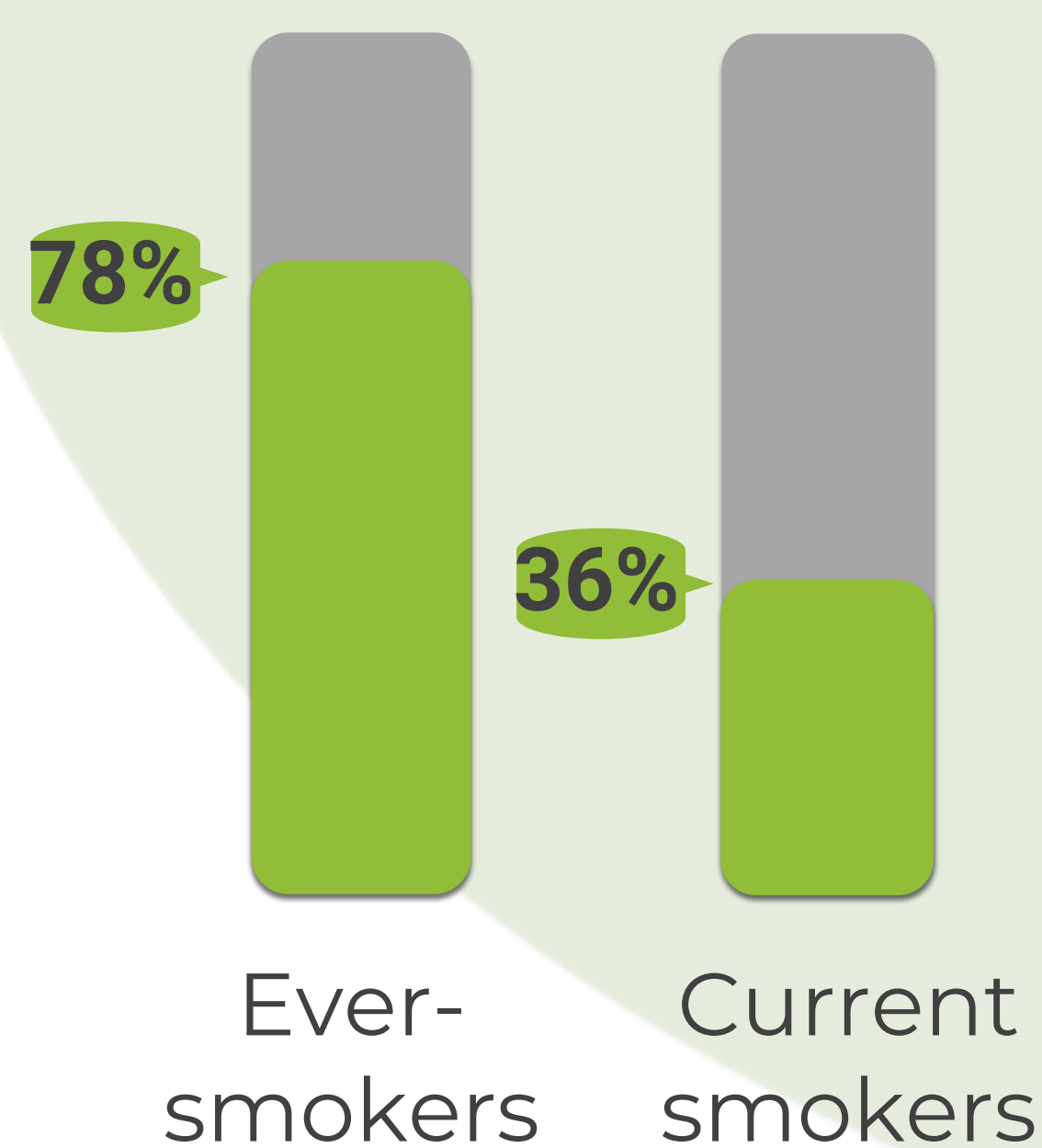


Vaping = friendship & community



Many vape to cope with mental illness symptoms

### Smoking status (N=102)



### Survey Demographics

#### Age Range

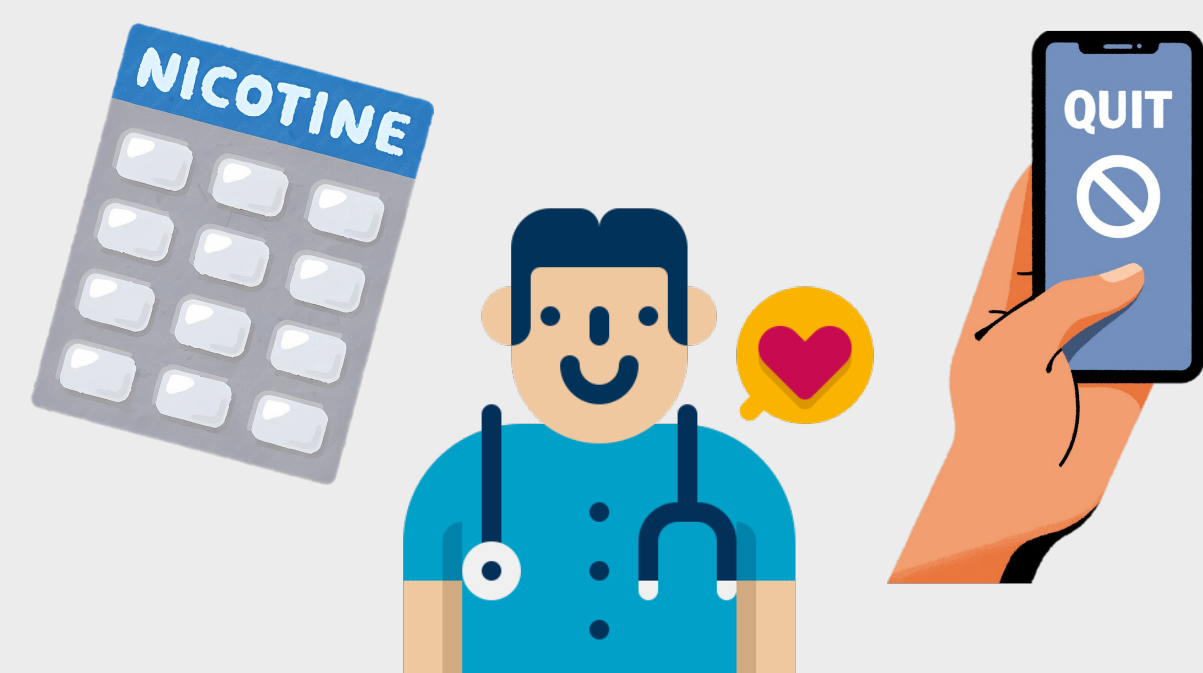
16-25 years

#### Gender Identity

46% Female  
46% Male  
6% Gender diverse

#### Cultural Identity

90% Non-Indigenous  
10% Aboriginal



Majority want to quit. Helpful tools: free NRT, support from health workers, quitting apps.



Vaping = unhealthy, but smoking = healthier than vaping



Many use cigarettes to quit vaping and end up dual-using

## NEXT STEPS

Design and implement a targeted vaping cessation intervention in a Sydney public health service, in collaboration with youth experiencing psychosis or at-risk mental states.

## REFERENCES

