

Peer Review

Review of: "The WHO strategies to reduce tobacco-related deaths are insufficient"

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The article presents a strong case for harm reduction in tobacco control, particularly highlighting the potential benefits of alternative nicotine products like e-cigarettes and snus, while citing notable references. It raises valid concerns about the WHO's stance and suggests that a more open-minded approach could help reduce smoking-related deaths. However, while the argument is compelling, there are areas where the presentation of data, choice of examples, and writing style could be improved.

One key issue is the selective use of data. While the article cites reputable studies, it focuses primarily on cases that support harm reduction, such as Sweden's success with snus and Japan's decline in smoking due to heated tobacco products. It does not fully explore whether similar results have been replicated elsewhere or whether other tobacco control measures also contributed to these outcomes.

The writing style is persuasive but leans towards advocacy rather than neutrality. The WHO's position is presented as overly rigid, with phrases like "the spread of misinformation." A softer tone, recognising both the benefits and potential risks of harm reduction, would make the argument more credible.

Overall, the article raises important points about tobacco control but would benefit from a broader perspective and a more even-handed discussion of the evidence. A more inclusive approach, addressing different regional contexts and regulatory challenges, would make the article more insightful.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.