

# Hookah (Waterpipe) Use in Licensed Establishments



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1. Consult with community stakeholders on measures, including prohibition, to address the health risks of waterpipe (hookah) smoking in Toronto commercial establishments and connected patios
2. Report international best practices on hookah legislation and an economic impact analysis on businesses

## Current Report Presents:

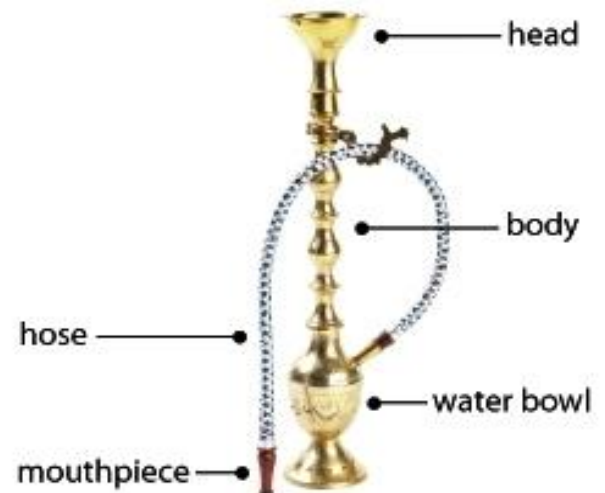
- Update on health evidence
- Consultation findings
- Proposed policy approach



# Hookah Smoking

- Hookahs are used to smoke tobacco or non-tobacco products called shisha
- Also known as waterpipe, narghile, hubble bubble, ghelyoon, ghalyan, goza, argmile
- Usually heated by burning charcoal
- Often a collective activity
- Traditionally used to smoke tobacco in Iran, South Asian and Middle Eastern countries, but their use has increased in North America, especially among youth and young adults

**A typical hookah**



# Key Concerns

- Hookah smoking poses health risks to users and those exposed to the smoke, including employees
- About 60 Toronto businesses allow hookah use on their premises, more than any other Ontario municipality
- Hookah use in licensed establishments normalizes smoking in public places
- 10% of Ontario students (grades 7-12) used a hookah in the past year in 2013
- 38% of Ontario students (grades 9-12) believe hookah use is less harmful than smoking cigarettes



**A 2013 study conducted by the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU) at 12 indoor and 5 outdoor hookah cafes in Toronto found:**

- High levels of CO and PM<sub>2.5</sub> (fine air pollutant particles)
- Air pollution at levels that are considered harmful to human health
- Outdoor hookah cafes showed less harmful levels than indoors, but air quality levels were still poor
- High levels of air nicotine found in most locations suggest that tobacco shisha is smoked in contravention of the SFOA



## Overall themes and key findings:

- Low awareness about the health risks of hookah smoking
- Visiting hookah establishments is a social and cultural practice for many
- Nearly half of patrons would still visit the businesses even if they did not offer hookah smoking
- Mixed views on a possible prohibition

**A growing number of Canadian and American jurisdictions have addressed hookah use through various laws or bylaws.**

- In Ontario: Peterborough, Orillia, Bradford, West Gwillimbury and Barrie
- Outside of Ontario: Quebec, Alberta, Nova Scotia and City of Vancouver
- In the United States: the states of Illinois, New Mexico, Michigan, New Jersey and Maine, and the City of Chicago and New York City

# Why prohibition?

- Most health protective option to address health risks to hookah users, employees and non-smoking patrons
- Need to reduce visibility and acceptability of smoking in public places
- Follow trend of municipalities around the world which prohibit hookah use at commercial establishments
- Can be paired with public education to address misconceptions about health risks





# Proposed Approach - Licensing By-Law

- TPH recommends hookah use be prohibited at Toronto establishments that are licensed or required to be licensed.
- Executive Director, Municipal Licensing & Standards will report to the Licensing and Standards Committee on June 25, 2015.
- This approach will:
  - Capture any type of licensed establishment (including connected patios)
  - Prevent new businesses from offering hookah



- TPH recommends that changes come into force on October 1, 2015
- TPH would enforce the regulatory changes in response to complaints
- Progressive enforcement in response to complaints after changes are enacted to allow time for education of operators and the public
- TPH/MLS could communicate by-law requirements through the (annual) renewal process for licenses

## Address low awareness of health risks among:

- hookah users / patrons
- business owners
- post-secondary students
- cultural groups

## Activities:

- Print and online ads – NOW magazine, Metro, BlogTO
- Restaurant / Bars restrooms (6 weeks)
- TPH website and social media
- Youth and cultural events (YHAN) /Pan Am Games
- Sustainment via integration in TPH program work – education, enforcement, website and social media

