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Vincere Cancer Center Joins Local Fight Against Big Tobacco

PHOENIX -- [Vincere Cancer Center](#) has joined in the battle against Big Tobacco in Phoenix, offering its support to the [Flavors Hook Kids Phoenix Coalition](#) and its effort to secure passage of an ordinance to end the sale of flavored tobacco products in the city.

Vincere Cancer Center, co-founded by Dr. Vershelee Shukla a leading radiation oncologist in the Phoenix Scottsdale area, joins other healthcare organization in the war against cancer that are a part of the coalition. Other members include the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Cancer Support Community Arizona, and the Health System Alliance of Arizona and its member hospital organizations: Banner Health, Dignity Health, HonorHealth and Tenet Healthcare.

“Flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products hook kids, plain and simple” said Dr. Shukla. “Menthol, mint and fruit flavored products mask the harshness of tobacco and make it easier to consume. But the flavors don’t eliminate the health risks and the need to take action to save our kids from a lifetime of nicotine addiction”

These organizations are on the frontline of medical treatment and care - not only making huge strides in the fight against cancer but also the coronavirus.

With this novel virus, it has never been more important to keep our lungs healthy. One of the best ways to do this is to quit smoking and vaping – and to prevent young people from ever starting in the first place. There is conclusive evidence[1] that smoking increases susceptibility for respiratory infections, weakens the immune system and is a major cause of underlying health conditions that increase risk for COVID-19.

For these reasons, there is mounting concern among leading public health organizations and medical experts that people who smoke or vape are at greater risk for serious complications from COVID-19. Adding to these concerns is the fact that youth e-cigarette use has skyrocketed to record highs in the U.S. More than 3.6 million U.S. kids – including one in six Arizona high school students now use e-cigarettes regularly.

The Vincere Cancer Center has been proactive in the community supporting efforts related to the coronavirus pandemic. Vincere Cancer Center is the medical provider for the City of Phoenix’s Mobile Testing Van providing free rapid COVID-19 tests to the community at no cost.

The following organizations are committed to helping Phoenix lead in the effort to eliminate the sale of all flavored tobacco products through a comprehensive ordinance that includes licensing all tobacco retailers and active enforcement that includes fines and license suspension and revocation for non-compliant retailers:

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- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- Arizona Academy of Family Physicians
- Arizona Academy of Pediatricians
- Arizona Alliance of Black School Educators
- Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers
- Arizona Asthma Coalition
- Arizona Association of Health Plans
- Arizona Medical Association
- Arizona Nurses Association
- Arizona Osteopathic Medical Association
- Arizona Public Health Association
- Arizona School Administrators
- Arizona Thoracic Society
- Arizonans Concerned About Smoking
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona
- Black Mothers Forum
- Black Nurses Association of Greater Phoenix Area
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix
- Chicanos Por La Causa
- Cancer Support Community - Arizona
- Children's Action Alliance
- Community Bridges
- Health System Alliance of Arizona
 - Banner Health
 - Dignity Health
 - HonorHealth
 - Tenet Healthcare
- Help Enrich African American Lives Coalition
- Maricopa County Medical Society
- Maricopa Area Labor Federation
- National African American Tobacco Prevention Network
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- notMYkids
- Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation
- School Nurses Organization of Arizona
- Valle del Sol

With enactment of the ordinance, Phoenix would join a [growing number of states and cities](#) across the country that have passed similar laws to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.

For more information visit www.flavorshookkidsphoenix.org and follow on social media at @FlavorsHookKidsPhoenix.

[1] Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0410.pdf>

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