

Setting the Standard: GINN Panel Unpacks Quality and Safety in Nicotine Products



Insights from EVO NXT 2025, Milan

The Global Institute for Novel Nicotine (GINN) hosted a powerful panel discussion at EVO NXT in Milan, bringing together experts from across science, compliance, and product development to address a crucial industry challenge: how to ensure quality and safety in novel nicotine products.

Why a Code of Practice Matters

Moderated by [Robert Sidebottom](#) ([Arcus Compliance](#)), the panel explored the foundational goals and real-world applications of the GINN Code of Practice. This initiative was developed to guide manufacturers, regulators, and retailers toward higher standards in quality control, product safety, and ethical marketing.

Panelist [Rachel Schmidt](#) ([ALINC Consulting](#)), a former Assistant Director at the FDA's Center for Tobacco Products, emphasized that manufacturing quality is just as critical as public health impact in regulatory reviews—particularly in the U.S. She explained that

failure to meet basic manufacturing and documentation standards is grounds for denial, regardless of product efficacy.

[Chris Allen](#) (CEO, [Broughton](#)) added that the industry must avoid the mistakes of the past, such as seen in the vaping category, by ensuring transparency and adopting minimal but effective quality controls, including batch tracking and proper labeling.

Learning from Vaping's Mistakes

The panel reflected on how vaping products suffered from poor regulation, miscommunication, and a lack of quality standards early on—leading to widespread misinformation, safety scares, and regulatory backlash. According to Rob Burton (Plxsur), preemptive self-regulation is essential to avoid history repeating itself.

Burton and Allen both stressed that if the industry doesn't lead on setting responsible standards now, regulators will impose blanket restrictions later—often driven by precaution, not science.

Building Trust Through Education

A recurring theme was the importance of educating both consumers and regulators. While the general public often assumes that a product's presence in stores means it's been reviewed or approved, many of the products on the market today do not meet even basic safety standards.

Chris Allen reported that in a recent market review in the UK, over half of the nicotine pouch products examined failed to comply with General Product Safety Regulations, and only 10% met BSI PAS standards.

Panelists agreed that improving trust requires collaboration across the supply chain—manufacturers, retailers, and compliance bodies—supported by voluntary standards like GINN's Code of Practice.

Industry Leadership and Manufacturer Commitment

[Waqas Khan](#) (CEO, [CLEW](#)) shared insights from a brand perspective, outlining his company's policy of not producing pouches above 20 mg and maintaining FDA-level manufacturing compliance—even in unregulated markets. Clue's internal standards and international expansion strategy are rooted in responsible product stewardship and harm reduction.

Khan also emphasized the importance of engagement with local regulators and public health advocates when entering new markets. “If a country doesn’t yet have nicotine regulations, we help them build them,” he noted.

A Path Toward Responsible Innovation

The panel concluded that GINN’s Code of Practice can act as a living framework—realistic, adaptable, and designed to evolve alongside the industry. Rather than overwhelming companies with GMP-level requirements, the Code provides a strong foundation for product integrity, traceability, and market accountability.

As Schmidt remarked, “Perfect should never be the enemy of good.” Starting now with what’s achievable—no matter how small—is the first step toward meaningful compliance and consumer safety.

Final Thoughts

The session was not only a call to action but also a demonstration of unity across the novel nicotine industry. By aligning on science, ethics, and practical regulation, GINN and its members are building the tools needed to protect consumers, support innovation, and defend the integrity of reduced-risk products in a highly scrutinized market.

As GINN Director Shem Baldeosingh reminded attendees: “This is about shaping the regulatory future, not reacting to it.”



Watch the full interview here: https://youtu.be/zxdM_zMOVVA



Want to be part of the movement shaping smarter nicotine regulation and innovation?



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