The Department of Health (DoH) has set its eyes on the use of e-cigarettes that have been in the market and are being patronized mostly by youths.

 Appearing at the “Kapihan sa Manila Bay” forum at Café Adriatico, Dr. Anton Javier, director of the Food and Drug Authority (FDA) in charge of e-cigarettes, vapes and heated tobacco products, yesterday announced that regulatory steps are now being undertaken by the agency to regulate the use of vape and other similar smoke devices in the market.

 Javier said an administrative order issued by the DoH this July 2019 requires all e-cigarette manufacturers to secure a license from the FDA for the liquid that is the product’s main ingredient.

 While admitting that there are still no proven ill effects on the use of vape cigarettes, they have still to undergo thorough study that will last a minimum of five years and a maximum of 10 years. Only after this time may regulatory agencies say whether these are harmful to the body.

 Dr. Tikki Pang, a harm reduction expert, claimed that vape is 95 percent harmless to the body.

 Unlike in a cigarette where burning tobacco harms the lungs, Pang said vape heats a liquid that is the main ingredient of the e-cigarette.

 “But the only harm in smoking vape is the way the liquid is prepared where it is mostly done in backyards” he noted.

 Javier noted that up to this day only one company has registered to the call for all e-cigarette manufacturers to apply for an FDA license. This order will end next month.

 The DoH had planned on conducting a series of public hearings before it will finalize proper government regulations on the products.

 “All stakeholders must be consulted. In this way, we can make a final product which will come from the recommendations of various sectors from medical, pharmacological to business entrepreneurs and consumers themselves,” Javier said.