Content analysis of cannabis vaping videos on YouTube

FINDINGS
Many videos portrayed risky behaviour and had a high number of views. These are also not age-restricted and thus easily accessible to adolescents.

AIMS
The internet has become a popular source to assess cannabis-related information. The aim of this study is to identify a set of cannabis vaping videos on YouTube and to examine the themes and content of these videos.

METHOD
6 themes were identified

"DIY" how to make THC e-liquids
"Warning" dangers of vaping
"Celebratory" vape an entire THC cartridge in a single setting
"Reflective" discussion on vaping lifestyle by cannabis influencers
"Advertisement" latest product
"Product review" review of > 1 product with no intention to sell

The most popular video has a 'celebratory' theme. It has been viewed more than 4 million times.

The THC content in some DIY videos is claimed to be as high as 90%.

CONCLUSION: Advertising of illegal substances is prohibited on YouTube. The cannabis industry is leveraging the power of digital influencers to promote their products. Warning videos received fewer attention suggesting different strategies maybe need to increase engagement by young audiences. All these, together with vigorous monitoring on videos that portrays risky behaviour needs to be considered for future policy development around cannabis vaping.