

**Operational Standards for
the Distribution of
Medicinal Cannabis**



I. Access

1. Eligibility for Membership

- a. Age/Parental Permission

- b. Recommendations and Confirmation of Diagnosis

- c. Special Consideration: Mental Health Conditions

2. Registration Requirements

- a. Personal Information
- b. Consent Form
- c. Rights and Responsibilities

1. Eligibility for Membership

Medical Cannabis should be accessible and available in a similar manner as other medicinal herbs. Cannabis is a non-toxic and highly effective medicinal herb that can be safely self-prescribed and its dosage safely self-titrated. Cannabis does not require the same precautions as potentially toxic and harmful pharmaceutical medications require.

Our organization supplies cannabis to those who need relief from a condition or symptom from which they are suffering, and who choose to use cannabis for that purpose. Such people would otherwise be prescribed a pharmaceutical drug, or utilize over-the-counter or street drugs for the same purpose.

The following restrictions to our services reflect a balance of the value of autonomy, with the current legal and political climate:

a. Age/Parental Permission

In order to access cannabis at the British Columbia Compassion Club Society (BCCCS) members must be 18 years or older, or have written consent from a parent or legal guardian. This age reflects the legal age of adulthood, however some people under the age of 18 may need access to cannabis and obtaining access at a compassion club would be the safest option for them. We will continue to monitor the political and legal climate regarding this regulation.

b. Recommendations and Confirmation of Diagnosis

Cannabis is an herb, therefore the authorization to recommend access must be given to those health care practitioners most experienced with herbal medicine and not be limited to allopathic physicians.

The BCCCS requires a confirmation of diagnosis and a recommendation for the use of cannabis. We currently accept confirmations of diagnosis and recommendations from physicians (GP or specialist), naturopathic doctors, or doctors of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Clinical herbalists will be added to this list once they have the licensing bodies and associations necessary to be legally regulated.

Many health practitioners refuse to recommend the use of cannabis.

Refusals are most often based on the legal status of cannabis, pressure from their professional associations, colleges and insurers, or the lack of research to the level required for pharmaceutical products, rather than due to medical concerns. In such cases, for certain conditions and symptoms, a confirmation of diagnosis is the only requirement in order to not unduly restrict availability of cannabis to persons who may receive health benefits from its use.

These conditions include: HIV/AIDS, Cancer, Fibromyalgia, Multiple Sclerosis, Seizure disorders, Chronic pain, severe weight loss, raised intra-ocular pressure/glaucoma, severe nausea, migraines, hepatitis C, Crohn's disease, colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, Anorexia and other eating disorders, Stress and Anxiety disorders, Depression, substance addiction.

All documents must be faxed in from the health care practitioner's office, and confirmed.

The use of cannabis would be more suitably regulated under the Natural Health Care products, like other herbs, and its use should be opened up to any condition and symptom for which there are over-the-counter medications available to Canadians for self-prescription and self-titration. Such medications include: Headache medications, sleeping pills, appetite stimulants, pre/ menstrual medications, muscle relaxants, anxiety medications, digestive aids, stimulants. These are often self-diagnosed as well.

(See Appendix I: Doctors' package)

c. Special Consideration: Mental Health Conditions

The majority of our members have mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and stress along-side their primary medical condition. For many members such conditions are their primary medical condition for which they use cannabis. Cannabis can be extremely effective for such conditions.

Other members have recommendations from their doctors for mental health conditions such as bi-polar, schizophrenia, and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For many people we have seen cannabis be very effective for such conditions. In a very few cases, we have felt that cannabis was not beneficial. In respect of people's autonomy, we look at each case separately. In many cases, it appears that problems only occur in cases where members are not taking their prescribed medications. We have in at least one case, stopped access to cannabis until a member was back on his medications and stable. At that point we permitted him to access cannabis under a watchful eye, and found that there were no further problems.



Since these conditions are less well understood in society in general and the medical community in particular, we do not accept a confirmation of diagnosis only for them. We feel that there is a benefit for their primary health care giver to be aware of their use of cannabis through the compassion club so we may work together if necessary.

To learn more about mental health and cannabis, we have studied the available research and we have conducted a survey on mental health to improve our knowledge about how our members use cannabis for such purposes. The survey was completed by 200 members and the results are currently being compiled.

2. Registration Requirements

a. Personal Information

Upon registering as a member of the BCCCS, we collect specific personal information in order to maintain the highest quality of service possible. (See Appendix II: Registration Package)

- i. Personal information and emergency contact info
- ii. Detailed information regarding conditions, symptoms, and use of other medications
- iii. Previous use of and experience with cannabis
- iv. Other relevant info: pregnancy, eating and sleeping habits, allergies, use of other drugs including tobacco, alcohol, cocaine, heroin and methadone, etc.
- v. Photo ID is required.



b. Consent Form

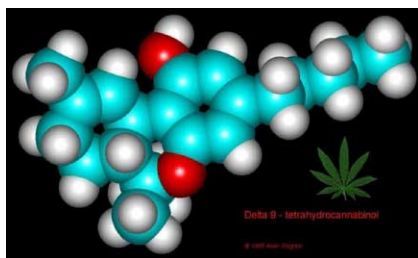
Members must also sign a witnessed consent form designating us as their agent to procure cannabis on their behalf and agreeing that this cannabis is for them only. (See Appendix II: Registration package)

c. Rights and Responsibilities

Members rights and responsibilities within the organization are reviewed. These cover areas that promote a safe, friendly and secure environment for all our members and staff, respect of our neighbourhood, and smooth daily operations around the distribution of cannabis and our other services. (See Appendix III: Member's rights and responsibilities)

II. Education

1. Introduction to the plant
 - a. The whole plant
 - b. Cannabinoids
 - c. Methods of Preparation
2. Strain Selection and Effects
 - a. Sativas
 - b. Indicas
 - c. Crosses
3. Dosage, Potency, Tolerance and Dependence
4. Ingestion Techniques
 - a. Smoked
 - b. Edible Products
 - c. Tincture
5. Safe Smoking Techniques
6. Side Effects and Safe Use
7. Quality
8. Drug Interactions
9. Political Climate and Legal Risks



It is important that people using cannabis as a medicine are equipped with all of the information necessary to medicate safely and effectively.

Upon registering with the BCCCS, members have an hour-long appointment for an education session that is tailored to their needs. This session includes the following:

(See Appendix IV: Safe and Effective Use Pamphlet)

1. Introduction to the plant

This is based on the most up-to-date information about cannabis, based on limited research, from the perspective of the user.

a. The whole plant

The whole cannabis plant may be efficiently utilized. The flower (“bud”) is the most potent part of the plant, therefore the bud is preferable for smoking. The leaves (“shake”) and stems are less potent and should not be smoked. Shake is preferable for baking since it is less costly and its potency is increased by this mode of ingestion. Shake may also be used to make tinctures, teas or concentrates.

b. Cannabinoids

Each strain of cannabis contains different ratios of “cannabinoids”, natural drug components, which work synergistically to provide its therapeutic effects.

The main active ingredient in marijuana is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC has euphoric, stimulant, muscle-relaxing, anti-epileptic, anti-emetic, anti-inflammatory, appetite stimulating, bronchiodilating, hypotensive, antidepressant, and analgesic effects. High potency cannabis contains at least 15% THC.

Cannabidiol (CBD) lessens the psychoactive effects of THC and has sedative and analgesic effects. Cannabichromene (CBC) promotes the analgesic effects of THC and has sedative effects. Cannabigerol (CBG) has sedative effects and antimicrobial properties, as well as lowering intra-ocular pressure. It is the biogenetic precursor of the other cannabinoids. Cannabinol (CBN) is a mildly psychoactive degradation of THC; its primary effects are to lower intra-ocular pressure and anti-epileptic.

(See Appendix IV: Safe and effective use of Cannabis pamphlet)

c. **Methods of Preparation**

Many of Cannabis's active ingredients are extractable into fat and alcohol. Cannabis infused oils, butters and alcohol and can be used for making baked goods and tinctures to provide relief to those who are unable to smoke, or as a preference, compliment or alternative to smoking.

2. **Strain Selection and Effects**

Strains of cannabis which are either from the Indica or Sativa family have very different cannabinoid profiles and effects. These differences must be explained in order for a member to relieve their symptoms effectively. It must also be acknowledged that these are general tendencies but effects vary from person to person.

Strains of cannabis which are either from the Indica or Sativa family have very different cannabinoid profiles and effects.

a. **Sativas**

Primarily, the effects of *Sativas* are on the mind and emotions. In this regard they tend to be more stimulating, uplifting, energizing and creativity enhancing. These benefits can be particularly helpful for the psychological component of many illnesses. *Sativas* are generally better for daytime use.

Some benefits of Sativa strains are as follows:

- reduces depression
- relieves headaches and migraines
- energizes and stimulates
- reduces awareness of pain
- increases focus and creativity
- reduces nausea
- stimulates appetite
- expectorant

b. **Indicas**

The effects of *Indicas* are predominantly physical although the relief of certain physical symptoms can have an emotional result as well. These effects can be characterized as relaxing, sedating, and pain reducing. *Indicas* are generally best for later in the day and before bed.



Some benefits of Indica strains are as follows:

- reduces pain
- relaxes muscles
- relieves spasms
- reduces inflammation
- aids sleep
- reduces anxiety and stress
- reduces nausea
- stimulates appetite
- relieves headaches and migraines
- reduces intra-ocular pressure
- anti-convulsant
- reduces seizure frequency
- expectorant

c. **Crosses**

Hybrids are the result of cross-pollination of various strains. The characteristics, and hence the effects, of one strain will usually be dominant. For example, *Indica*-dominant crosses are good for pain relief, with the *Sativa* component helping with energy and activity levels making it particularly effective for day-time pain relief. *Sativa*-dominant crosses are good for stimulating appetite, with the *Indica* component helping to reduce body pain and increase relaxation. Even crosses are good for appetite, focus and mood balancing.

We are beginning to identify particular varieties that are effective for sleep, pain, appetite and energy as well as for specific medical conditions. In the future, we will have conducted research on strain and symptom correlations and will be able to give more detailed cannabinoid profiles to our members so they can more accurately select the desired strain for the desired effects.

Members are given a tracking sheet so that they can track their use to find the strains that work best for them under various circumstances. Our menu describes the different strains in term of their effects, and staff members are always on hand to advise on strain selection.

We also track all member purchases in order to maintain a detailed record to assist staff to advise on strain selection, and to verify each purchase.

3. Dosage, Potency, Tolerance and Dependence

The effects from smoking cannabis are usually first felt within 30-60 seconds and develop fully within 5-15 minutes. These effects may last from 30 minutes to 3 hours. Self-titration allows the member to control their own dosage through inhaling a small amount, observing the effect, and deciding if they require another dose. Other modes of ingestion have less immediate effects, and effects can be more pronounced, therefore more care and time needs to be taken to find the right dosage. Dosages are different for every person, depending on many factors. Since cannabis is relatively non-toxic and safe, self-titration is the most efficient and effective method of dosage selection.

An important part of cannabis is potency. The many strains, and batches, of cannabis vary in strength. Choosing a strain with the desired strength allows a member to inhale the smallest amount possible, for their desired effects. This is beneficial for reducing costs and well as avoiding respiratory irritation.

Cannabis concentrates, such as hash and oil, are extremely effective as they offer direct access to the medicinal ingredients while avoiding the plant matter, as the resin has been extracted from the plant. It is important to ensure there are no adulterants used in the preparation of these products.

Tolerance to cannabis may develop through prolonged use of the same strain. Using different strains can reduce the build-up of tolerance. Taking a break from all cannabis use will also reduce tolerance.

There is no physical dependence from chronic or periodic administration of cannabis. There are no significant withdrawal effects when cannabis use is ceased or decreased. However, symptom relief will also be decreased so there may be some psychological dependence due the loss of the desired effects when use is ceased.

4. Ingestion Techniques

a. Smoked

When cannabis is smoked, the active ingredients are deposited directly into the blood stream after being absorbed through the mucus membrane of the lung. Self-titration is easiest with smoked cannabis since the effects are usually felt within 30-60 seconds and develop fully

within 5-15 minutes. The effects may last from 30 minutes to 3 hours. Take 1-2 puff and wait 15 minutes in order to assess the right dosage. Take more puffs as needed.

b. Edible Products

When cannabis is digested, the active ingredients are metabolized in the liver before entering the blood stream. Edible cannabis takes 1-2 hours to take effect therefore it is more challenging to self-titrate. Start by eating a small bite and waiting an hour or two, and if needed increase the dose very gradually. The effects of edible cannabis are different than smoked cannabis. They tend to be considerably more sedative and psychoactive. Due to the strength, eating too much can have an unpleasant effect that is important to be aware of. The effects last 6-8 hours.

c. Tincture

Tinctures are absorbed directly into the blood stream when taken under the tongue, or through the digestive system when swallowed. It may also be dropped in a hot liquid to evaporate the alcohol base. Start with 3 drops and wait an hour. Adjust the dosage as needed.

5. Safe Smoking Techniques

Smoking Cannabis may lead to respiratory irritation, especially with prolonged and heavy use. Such use often occurs with chronic illnesses. This irritation can be reduced with following techniques:

- i) Cannabis may be ground or cut and then rolled into a “joint”. We recommend using hemp-based rolling papers to avoid inhaling chemical additives and excess glue and to avoid using tree paper.
- ii) Pipes can be used to avoid smoking paper and are useful when smoking small quantities. We recommend glass pipes to avoid inhaling particular matter from other materials, such as stone or metal.
- iii) Water pipes can be used to cool the temperature of inhaled plant matter, thus lessening bronchial irritation.



- iv) Vaporizers can be used as a smokeless alternative and also provide a uniquely “clear” psychoactive effect.
- v) A blend of lung tonic herbs can be smoked with cannabis as an alternative to mixing with tobacco.

Hemp rolling papers, glass pipes, water pipes, vaporizers and herbal tonic smoking blend are available at the BCCCS.

6. Side Effects and Safe Use

There are some effects of cannabis that are not therapeutic and can be mitigated through awareness. As well, there are some practical concerns that should be reviewed to ensure safe use. All users should be made aware of these:

There are some effects of cannabis that are not therapeutic and can be mitigated through awareness.

- Cannabis mixed with alcohol may cause vomiting and nausea
- Cannabis may cause dizziness upon standing due to lowered blood pressure.
- Initial increase in heart rate and/or blood pressure may be problematic for those with heart conditions or severe anxiety.
- Those receiving digitalis or other cardiac medications should use cannabis under careful supervision by a medical doctor.
- Cannabis may cause a decrease in coordination and cognition, and short-term memory loss while medicated.
- Effects vary from person to person
- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery if impaired by cannabis (*indicas* can be especially sedating).
- Cannabis preparations should be eaten by starting with a small bite, waiting an hour or two and, if needed, increasing the dose very gradually throughout the day.
- Heavy smoking with no harm reduction techniques (i.e. smoking small amounts of high potency organic cannabis or the use of a filtration system) may lead to respiratory irritation.
- Hold shared joints and other smoking implements to avoid touching your lips to them.
- Choose organic cannabis whenever possible to minimize exposure to chemicals. This is especially important for people with compromised immune systems.

7. Quality

Members should be informed of the quality standards, and how to judge quality for themselves.

(See Quality of herbal medicine under Section IV: Supply)

8. Drug Interactions

Studies on the interaction of Cannabis and pharmaceutical medications is sparse and inconclusive. Pharmacy magazine reported in June 2001 that:

- Cannabis has been shown to decrease the clearance of barbiturates so they remain in the body longer, and may need to be reduced.
- Cannabis has been shown to increase the clearance of Theophylline, therefore its dose may need to be increased
- There can be side-effects when cannabis is combined with Fluoxetine or Disulfiram. These effects can include mild mania and excitement with moderate behaviour change
- Cannabis may enhance the effects of amphetamines, anticholinergics, antihistamines, cocaine, hypnotics, psychotomimetics, sedatives or sympathomimetics

Note: This study does not take into account the effects of different strains or modes of ingestion.

Members overwhelmingly reported in a BCCCS study that they do not find any negative interactions. Members also find they can reduce the dosage of their prescription medications with cannabis use. Cannabis also mitigates negative side effects of prescription medications, which in some cases is the reason for their use of cannabis.

9. Political Climate and Legal Risks

It is important for members to know that it is still illegal in Canada to possess, grow, or distribute cannabis. Users must be aware of the risks, and of the political and legal climate in the country and their region and must know their rights and take precautions to avoid the harmful effects of arrest, cannabis seizure, imprisonment and criminal record.

III. Distribution

1. Quantity restrictions
2. Variety of Strains
3. Other Products
4. Selection Support
5. Handling and Storage
6. Packaging
7. Pricing
 - a) Cost of medicine and Donation program
8. Sales Records
9. Purchasing Options
10. Visitors
11. Staffing
 - a. Training and Experience
 - b. Legal Understanding
12. Cleanliness Standards
13. Security Standards
14. General Safety Considerations

1. Quantity restrictions

Each member may access the equivalent of five grams per day. Those who are attempting to access more than 5 grams/day are communicated with regarding their use. Some people actually require more than 5 grams/day to control their symptoms and compassionate exceptions are made. Others may be using cannabis as an escape from emotional issues, or may have an increased tolerance from over use of a particular strain. At the BCCCS, we offer access to counseling as an option for handling emotional issues. We also recommend a therapy, such as acupuncture or herbology, to assist in the relief of symptoms, therefore potentially lowering the quantity of cannabis required.

These restrictions also assist in the prevention of the redistribution of cannabis.

2. Variety of Strains

Offering a variety of strains is essential, in order to effectively treat a wide variety of symptoms and conditions. The prolonged use of a single strain will result in tolerance as the receptors become saturated. Using a variety of strains will minimize the build up of therapeutic tolerance

3. Other Products

It is important to have a variety of cannabis products available as alternatives to smoked cannabis. These products include:

- Baked goods, some of which are wheat and sugar free, as many patients must avoid these ingredients in their diets.
- Hash provides a concentrated dose of cannabinoids, allowing members to consume less plant matter to obtain the desired dose.
- Tinctures are a highly effective alternative to both smoked cannabis and baked products.
- Cooking oil and butter which are infused with cannabis are used for cooking at home.

4. Selection Support

Staff should be well informed about the strains and other products being distributed. Gathering feedback from members on the efficacy of each strain can provide valuable anecdotal data to equip staff to assist members in selecting the right strain or product.

5. Handling and Storage

Clean hands, gloves or tongs must be used while handling cannabis. Storing cannabis in a cool, dry location, preferably in a dark glass container is the optimum choice for extending the shelf life of cannabis. It is essential that cannabis is stored in food safe containers to avoid any contamination in storage or transportation.

6. Packaging

Medicinal cannabis should be labeled. The label should contain the name of the strain, and the quantity, as well as clearly show this is medicinal cannabis.

7. Pricing

Medicinal cannabis must be affordable to those in need. One should not be forced to choose between buying groceries or medicinal cannabis, therefore the costs of the cannabis should be covered by Health Care for medical users. Distributors should be non-profit. The lowest price possible and donations are essential.

a. Cost of medicine and donation program

Cost of medicine is a big concern for all Canadians, and is not different for users of cannabis. Our members are informed of the price of cannabis which ranges from \$5-\$10 a gram. Some of our growers give us compassionate prices, which are passed on to our members. The price of cannabis is artificially inflated due to prohibition.

Since most of our members are living on very low fixed incomes, we try to provide some of their medicine to them at no cost. Our donation program provides 2 grams per week to each member at no cost, on a first come first serve basis, while supplies last. With our increased membership and increase in poverty due to provincial government cuts to the disability benefits, our program is not able to meet the need for free cannabis.

It is imperative that this medicine, like other medicines that are used for the same purposes, be covered by people's provincial health care insurance.

Medicinal cannabis must be affordable to those in need. One should not be forced to choose between buying groceries or medicinal cannabis.

8. Sales Records

Each purchase is recorded in terms of quantities taken, the price, and is initialed by the member to verify each transaction.

9. Purchasing Options

Due to the severity of the illnesses of some of our members, they cannot come in person to purchase their medicine. Alternatives must be provided to facilitate their access.

a. Designated purchaser

Members may designate a person to purchase their medicine for them. They must send the person in with a signed and dated note, indicating exactly what that person is to purchase for them. The designated person must also have the member's membership card and their own photo ID. As a final step, the member must call in to verbally confirm who is coming in for them and what they will be purchasing.

b. Delivery

For those unable to find somebody to come in on their behalf to make a purchase, it is important to have a delivery service. The member can pay the delivery person upon their receipt of their medicine.

c. Caregiver

Some people are consistently unable to come in to purchase their medicine and are too sick to write notes and call in each time, for example in a hospice situation. In such situations, a caregiver can be designated and registered (required to sign consent form and rights and responsibilities) and given a caregiver card allowing them to purchase on behalf of the member without the phone call, note and membership card.

d. Mail-out

There are many Canadians who do not have access to good quality cannabis in a safe and secure manner. For such people, we provide a mail-out service. These members are registered over the phone and can send their registrations forms back with photo ID.

10. Visitors

The BCCCS wants to support those who use medicinal cannabis while traveling away from their home community. The BCCCS has a relationship with members of other clubs and those with government licenses from programs that operate within similar guidelines to our club.

Visitors are expected to meet the same requirements as our members. All visitors must submit all of the following:

- Valid cannabis club/state program card and/or Health Canada license.
- Physician's statement from another cannabis club/state program or a medical marijuana prescription from a doctor.
- Canadian license holders do not need to give a physicians statement.
- Photo ID.

All information is verified with clubs and state registries. Health Canada does not have a system for verification yet.

Once approved, visitors are permitted four visits per year. After four visits, they must become full members in order to access our services. Visitors must sign our Visitors' Rights and Responsibilities and consent forms. If they are from the USA they must also sign a waiver declaring any cannabis procured from us is for use in Canada only.

The BCCCS wants to support those who use medicinal cannabis while traveling away from their home community.

11. Staffing

a. Training and Experience

Employees of a cannabis dispensary should have first aid training. They must be prepared to deal with infected blood, seizures, strokes, falls, and mental health issues. Experience with persons with disabilities is also valuable. They should be very familiar with cannabis, have an understanding of poverty and the surrounding issues, and be truly compassionate people.

Upon being hired at the BCCCS employees are educated regarding the plant, effects of the variety of strains on different symptoms and conditions, how to identify contaminated cannabis, dosage, potency, tolerance, dependence, ingestion techniques, side effects, safe use techniques and potential drug interactions.



b. Legal Understanding

While the legal status of medicinal cannabis remains dubious, it is crucial employees fully understand the legal risk they are undertaking to distribute medicinal cannabis.

12. Cleanliness Standards

A clean and safe environment is necessary to promote health and healing. Medicinal cannabis dispensaries should have a wheel chair accessible washroom with either hand disinfectant or anti-bacterial soap. Daily cleaning, dusting, mopping and vacuuming of the dispensary is necessary to minimize dust-borne allergens and surface-born contagions.

13. Security Standards

In order to provide a safe environment, and to avoid loss to the dispensary, serious security measures must be taken. Security measures for a medicinal cannabis dispensary are the same as are necessary to safely and securely operate any business dealing with a valuable product. Physical measures would include: adequate locks, security bars, an alarm system, and a safe for storage of cannabis and cash.

While medicinal cannabis remains illegal and therefore extremely valuable, it is imperative to use discretion when discussing sensitive information, such as: the identity and location of suppliers, cannabis transportation details, and details regarding the transportation of cash.

14. General Safety Considerations

In order to facilitate a safe environment, all WCB rules and regulations, city by-laws, and fire codes must be adhered to.

IV. Supply

1. Quality of Herbal Cannabis
 - a. Cultivation
 - b. Quality Control
2. Suppliers
 - a. Criteria
 - b. Number of Growers
 - c. Contracts



1. Quality of Herbal Cannabis

It is essential that medicinal cannabis is free of chemicals, harmful organisms, and any other potentially toxic or harmful agents, which may be found in cannabis. Many people using medicinal cannabis have depleted immune systems, or chemical sensitivity and may be seriously harmed by consuming contaminated cannabis.

a. Cultivation

- i. Contaminants
During the cultivation of medicinal cannabis, extreme caution and care must be taken in order to avoid contamination from chemical fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, moulds, mildews, fungi, etc. (See Appendix V: BCCCS Approved growing methods)

The BCCCS aims to have a 100% organic supply. We presently educate our growers on organic growing methods. Eventually we hope to see all cannabis dispensaries distributing only certified organic cannabis.

- ii. Flushing
All plants must be flushed for at least 10 days prior to harvest. Flushing means that the plants are provided only with pure water and no fertilizers. Please note, flushing products are not permitted.
- iii. Curing
After the cannabis has been harvested, it must be cured in order to extract all excess moisture and to ensure the cannabis smokes smoothly. Improperly cured cannabis can harbor potentially harmful moulds, mildews, fungi and spores. It is particularly important that people with depleted immune systems are not exposed to these micro-organisms. Cannabis must be cured carefully in a clean, dust free environment. Stems of properly cured Cannabis will break easily and produce an audible “snap” sound. The Club will not accept Cannabis which has not been cured properly.
- iv. Manicuring
All buds must be trimmed with minimal leaf and stalk remaining. Proper trimming is important to ensure members are not smoking excess leaf material.

v. Cleanliness of Grow Facility

In order to prevent the growth of micro-organisms, it is essential that the cleanliness of the grow space is maintained at all times.

No poisonous or harmful products, such as chemical based pesticides or fungicides, shall be permitted to enter a medicinal cannabis grow facility.

b. Quality Control

There are several mechanisms to assess quality and identify problems.

i. Visual and Tactile Inspection

- Cannabis should have a pleasing aroma. Odors of ammonia or mould signify a contamination regardless of whether the contaminants are visible.
Visible white or gray growth, of any kind, signifies a contamination of mould, mildew, or fungus.
- Cannabis should be dry to the touch with stalks that snap.
- Any person with a sensitivity to mould, mildew, fungus, or has a chemical sensitivity may have an allergic reaction to inhaling or tasting the cannabis.
- When smoking cannabis, the ash should not be black and solid, but light in colour and texture.
- Burning or tingling sensation on the lips or tongue may signify chemical contaminants or fertilizer residue.

ii. Laboratory Testing:

Medicinal cannabis users and growers must have access to laboratory facilities in order to obtain data on the quality of their medicine. Medicinal cannabis should be tested at a licensed laboratory. Presently, there are no labs in Canada licensed to test medicinal cannabis, including legal medicine possessed by government licensed users.

iii. Cleanliness of cannabis

Moulds, mildews, and fungi are potentially harmful and can be easily detected, identified, and quantified. Pesticides, fungicides and other harmful chemicals often used in horticulture can also be identified and quantified. Medicinal cannabis should be tested at a laboratory especially if there are concerns of contamination.

iv. Cannabinoid Profile

Access to the cannabinoid profile of the cannabis will educate and empower a medical marijuana user, allowing them to medicate more efficiently.

Medicinal cannabis users and growers must have access to laboratory facilities in order to obtain data on the quality of their medicine.

2. Suppliers

The medicinal cannabis community is concerned that the only legal supply will be limited to one or a few approved producers. Competition, in a free market, on the other hand will increase the quality, broaden the selection, and decrease the end cost of the medicine.

The plethora of experience and expertise within the medical cannabis community must be legitimized, valued and protected.

a. Criteria

Suppliers of medicinal cannabis are not required to be certified botanists or horticulturists. The cultivation of high quality cannabis requires experience and dedication. The priority must be to create a high quality product, rather than high quantities. Medicinal growers will work with challenging strains that require more time and space to cultivate than commercial strains.

We prioritize purchasing from members who are also growers, as we are committed to their financial empowerment.

b. Number of Growers

We work with as many growers as necessary to fulfill the demand of quantity and variety of strains. It is preferable to work with a diverse group of growers in order to offer insurance of our supply.

c. Contracts

We give contracts to compassionate growers who are growing high quality medicine and offer below black market prices, which are affordable for people with very low incomes.

It is important in this legal climate of prohibition to have a contract or written agreement in order to verify the relationship in a court of law. (See appendix VI: Cultivators contract)