

STATEMENT | DÉCLARATION

CMA Statement – Legalization of Marijuana

Ottawa, September 9, 2016 – The CMA’s submission to the Task Force on Marijuana Legalization and Regulation is framed by the fundamental position that the legalization of marijuana is a societal prerogative; the CMA is not weighing in on this decision as it has already been made.

Keeping with our mandate as the national voice for the highest standards of health and health care, the CMA is squarely focused on minimizing the negative impact on individuals and public health.

The CMA has longstanding concerns about the health risks associated with consuming marijuana, particularly in smoked form.

Children and youth are particularly at risk for marijuana-related harms, given their brain is undergoing rapid, extensive development.

As such, the CMA’s submission is framed by the overarching recommendation that the government must take a broad public health policy approach in developing the legalization framework. Focusing on the legalization issue alone is inadequate to deal with the complexity of the situation.

The CMA recommendations build on Canada’s experience regulating alcohol and tobacco. The legalization framework must include:

- Marketing and packaging restrictions
- Restrictions on the types of products and their potency
- Prohibiting home cultivation
- Expanding access to support services such as mental health and substance use services
- Expanding access to training programs in addiction medicine, and
- Making extensive educational resources on the risks of harm to the user and others available

We must recognize that the legalization of marijuana is a complex matter. Overall the CMA has submitted to the Task Force 22 evidence-based recommendations for a broad public health approach.

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