

<b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - MEDICAL PURPOSES</b>		Page 1 of 5
<b><u>EXECUTIVE SPONSORSHIP</u></b> Executive Medical Director, Quality and Safety	<b><u>INITIALLY RELEASED DATE</u></b> October 2018	<b><u>VERSION DATE</u></b> November 2023

### **INTENT / PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to set expectations for Fraser Health staff and physicians when responding to requests from [persons we serve](#) to use cannabis for medical purposes in a care setting.

Under [federal and provincial cannabis legislation](#), individuals (aged 19 years and older) may purchase cannabis for medical purposes from a [legal source](#) including [edible cannabis](#), [cannabis extracts](#) (e.g., oils) and [cannabis topicals](#) (e.g., creams). Refer to [Cannabis - Non-Medical Purposes - Corporate Policy](#) regarding use of cannabis for non-medical purposes.

### **POLICY**

The policy applies to all Fraser Health services in owned and operated facilities and to [persons we serve](#) in the Fraser Health Authority.

The policy is guided by the value commitments outlined in [Appendix A: Value Commitments Guiding This Policy](#).

### **STANDARDS**

- Smoking or vaporizing cannabis is prohibited on Fraser Health owned and or/operated premises, facilities and grounds (see [Smoke, Vapour and Tobacco Free Premises - Corporate Policy](#))
- [Persons we serve](#), [staff](#), [essential care partners](#) and [visitors](#) will not be involuntarily exposed to the secondary pharmacological effects or safety risks of cannabis.
- The use of cannabis for medical purposes shall not compromise standards of professional practice or increase legal liabilities of health care providers.
- Fraser Health Pharmacy Services does not supply cannabis. All cannabis used for medical purposes must be supplied by the [person we serve](#).
  - Cannabis for medical use is considered a patient's own controlled substance, see [Patient's Own Medication – Clinical Policy](#) and [Controlled Substances - Patient Care Areas - Clinical Policy](#)

### **Prescription:**

- Cannabis for medical purposes can be approved for use by [persons we serve](#) in Fraser Health facilities, provided that:
  - The [prescriber](#) has written an order in the individual's health record to permit use of own supply of cannabis and
    - The prescriber's order meets the requirements of a medication order, in accordance with [Medication Order Writing - Clinical Policy](#) specifying form, strength, dose, route, and frequency.
    - It is important that the dosage be clearly indicated to avoid ambiguity (e.g., two drops of oil once a day or rub a thin layer of cream twice a day).
    - Cannabis for smoking or vaporization is not an appropriate route for a medical order for the following reasons: a health care provider will not be able to administer and patient use of cannabis via smoking or vaporization is not in accordance with [Smoke, Vapour and Tobacco Free Premises - Corporate Policy](#).

<p><b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - MEDICAL PURPOSES</b></p>	<p>Page 2 of 5</p>
--	------------------------

- The [person we serve](#) must be able to obtain their own legal supply of cannabis.
  - If a new order for medical cannabis has been prescribed within a Fraser Health facility, the person we serve needs to [register with a licensed producer](#) to obtain cannabis products for medical use
- The person we serve's own supply of cannabis is accessed from a [legal source](#) and must be in the [original container](#).

**Identification, Verification and Processing:**

- Fraser Health Pharmacy Services to confirm that the cannabis supply is accessed from a legal source. See Appendix B: Packaging and Labelling Guide for Cannabis Products.
  - Verification of cannabis from a legal source can be done at the bedside (by ward clinical pharmacist/pharmacy technician) or in the hospital pharmacy (by cannabis being sent to hospital pharmacy for verification).
  - Where the pharmacy service is provided by a community or remote pharmacy, a [nurse](#):
    - Shall determine whether the risk of harm due to delayed therapy of the patient's own medication exceeds the risk of administering the drug without identification and assessment of Pharmacy Services (see [Patient's Own Medication – Clinical Policy](#))
    - May be responsible for confirming that the cannabis supply was accessed via a legal source (see [Patient's Own Medication – Clinical Policy](#)).
- Ensure that the product, form, and strength correspond to the medication order.
- Follow standard processes for identification, verification, processing the order, and labelling of the individual's own cannabis supply (see [Patient's Own Medication - Clinical Policy](#)).

**Administration and Documentation**

- [Health care providers](#) to administer [prescriber](#)-ordered cannabis to persons under their care.
- [Health care providers](#) to document the administration of cannabis on the Medication Administration Record (see [Medication Administration Record - Daily - Clinical Policy](#)).

**STORAGE AND HANDLING**

- Cannabis is stored in accordance with [Controlled Substances - Patient Care Areas - Policy](#)
  - As with other individual's own controlled substances, cannabis must be handled in a manner that permits an audit or investigation to be conducted, accompanied by a signature trail and documentation.

**DISPOSAL**

- If the person we serve leaves the premises without their medical cannabis or if the individual is deceased, please follow the [Patient's Own Medications – Clinical Policy](#) for disposal instructions.
- Where the pharmacy service is provided by a community or remote pharmacy, medical cannabis should be disposed as per current controlled substances disposal procedures.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Cannabis for medical purposes:** Cannabis which is obtained by the person we serve from a legal source under the Cannabis Act and is authorized by the [prescriber](#), such as a physician or [nurse](#) practitioner. This type of use is sometimes called therapeutic use.

<b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - MEDICAL PURPOSES</b>	<b>Page</b> <b>3 of 5</b>
--	------------------------------

**Legal Source:** Legal cannabis products are only sold through retailers authorized by provincial and territorial governments, with one exception. Individuals who are authorized by a health care professional can register to buy cannabis products for medical purposes directly from a federally licensed seller.

Every package of a legal cannabis product has:

- the standardized cannabis symbol
- mandatory health warning messages
- plain packaging and labelling that is child-resistant
- an excise stamp, which is different for each province and territory

**Non-medical cannabis:** Refers to any cannabis consumption outside the cannabis for medical purposes definition. This type of use is sometimes called recreational use.

**Nurse:** Includes registered nurse (RN), registered psychiatric nurse (RPN), licensed practical nurse (LPN), and nurse practitioner (NP) including temporary and provisional licensure. Employed student nurse (ESN) and employed student psychiatric nurse (ESPN) are nursing students who have limited responsibilities and duties and are under the regulatory supervision of a nurse.

**Prescriber:** Refers to a qualified health care provider with prescribing privileges, for applicable client care areas within facilities and programs owned or operated by Fraser Health.

## **APPENDICES**

[Appendix A: Value Commitments Guiding This Policy](#)

[Appendix B: Packaging and Labelling Guide for Cannabis Products](#)

## **REFERENCES**

1. Government of Canada. Accessing cannabis for medical purposes from a licensed producer [Internet]. 2021. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/getting-cannabis-from-licensed-producer/accessing-from-licensed-producer.html>.
2. Government of Canada. Cannabis Act. Justice Laws Website [Internet]. 2022. Available from: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-24.5/>.
3. Government of Canada. Regulations under the Cannabis Act [Internet]. 2019. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/laws-regulations/regulations-support-cannabis-act.html#1>.
4. Government of Canada. How to read and understand a cannabis product label [Internet]. 2022. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/personal-use/how-read-understand-cannabis-product-label.html>
5. Government of Canada. Final Regulations: Edible cannabis, cannabis extracts, cannabis topicals [Internet]. 2019. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/resources/regulations-edible-cannabis-extracts-topicals.html>
6. Government of Canada. Medical Use of Cannabis [Internet]. 2020. Available from:

<b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - MEDICAL PURPOSES</b>	Page 4 of 5
--	----------------

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/topics/cannabis-for-medical-purposes.html>.

7. Government of British Columbia. Liquor and Cannabis Licensing [Internet]. 2022. Available from: <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/lcrb/map>.

**DATE(S) REVISED / REVIEWED SUMMARY**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments / Changes</b>
1.0	October 2018	Initial policy released
2.0	January 2019	Revision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intent/Purpose section: Replaced Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations with Cannabis Regulations, recognize that cannabis for non-medical purposes is now legal in Canada</li> <li>• Policy Statements: Provided clarity on               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Facilitating purchase of cannabis by patients/clients/residents from provincially licensed retailers in addition to federally licensed sellers</li> <li>○ Review of patient documentation (medical document, registration document, cannabis label) no longer being required</li> <li>○ Pharmacy role in determining that the cannabis is obtained from a legal source</li> <li>○ Storage and inventory counts, in compliance with Fraser Health policy “Narcotics and Controlled Drugs”</li> <li>○ All nurses are now permitted to administer cannabis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Procedure section: Removed; additional resources pending</li> <li>• Definitions (new): Cannabis Act, Cannabis Regulations, Provincially Licensed Retailer, Registration Certificate, Registration Document</li> <li>• Definitions (removed): ACMPR, Narcotic Control Regulations</li> <li>• Definitions (revised): Licensed Producer, Medical Document, Medical Cannabis</li> <li>• Additional Resources: New</li> <li>• References: Updated</li> </ul>
3.0	November 2023	Revision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated to include Federal Legislation including edible cannabis</li> <li>○ Updated to align with non-medical cannabis policy (November 2022)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Policy Statements:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Renamed and renumbered section regulations</li> <li>○ Rewritten to be more concise overall</li> <li>○ Removed statement “Individuals who do not have their</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - MEDICAL PURPOSES</b>	<b>Page</b> <b>5 of 5</b>
--	------------------------------

		<p>own supply may access medical cannabis as per the process outlined in Appendix “Procedures for Accessing Cannabis for Medical Purposes”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Removed statement concerning permanent inventory count</li> <li>● Appendices             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Deleted Appendix: Procedures for Accessing Cannabis for Medical Purposes</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Definitions (removed): Cannabis Act, Cannabis Regulations, Medical Document, Nurse, Prescriber, Registration Certificate for possession only, Registration Document</li> <li>● Resources: Updated</li> <li>● References: Updated</li> </ul>
--	--	---