

<b><u>POLICY</u></b>		<b>Page</b> <b>1 of 4</b>
<b>CANNABIS - NON-MEDICAL PURPOSES</b>		
<b><u>EXECUTIVE SPONSORSHIP</u></b> Executive Medical Director, Quality and Safety	<b><u>INITIALLY RELEASED:</u></b> October 2018	<b><u>VERSION:</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 non-medical purposes in a care setting.

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

Fraser Health staff are not responsible for determining whether the use of cannabis is authorized by a health care provider's order or if the cannabis has been accessed from a [legal source](#), when used non-medically.

### **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**

If any of the following standards cannot be met, the [person we serve's](#) non-medical cannabis shall be sent home with a family member, [essential care partner](#), or support person.

- Non-medical cannabis, even when obtained from [legal sources](#) permitted in the [Cannabis Act](#), will not be administered by [staff](#).
- [Persons we serve, staff](#), essential care partners, and [visitors](#) will not be involuntarily exposed to the secondary pharmacological effects or safety risks of cannabis.
- 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](#)).
- Expectations of [staff](#) when an individual wants to use non-medical cannabis:
  - Inquire whether the intent to use non-medical cannabis is to address medical symptoms and consult with the Most Responsible Provider (MRP) to consider the use of cannabis for medical purposes, as appropriate. Refer to [Cannabis - Medical Purposes - Corporate Policy](#).
  - Ensure the MRP is aware of the individual's intent to use non-medical cannabis, so that the MRP can consider possible drug interactions, side effects and other impacts.
  - Maintain routine care and monitoring according to practice area standards.
  - Document, when aware, relevant factual clinical observations in the progress notes when individuals self-administer (e.g., "client left premises, returned 20 minutes later, and advised 'had smoked a joint' and returned to bed").
  - Communicate expectations of the [persons we serve](#) when using non-medical cannabis, which includes:

<p><b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - NON-MEDICAL PURPOSES</b></p>	<p>Page 2 of 4</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------

- Only possess non-medical cannabis for personal use – any other use or action (e.g., supplying, distributing, selling, and/or sharing non-medical cannabis) is prohibited at Fraser Health care settings.
- Comply with [laws and regulations](#) regarding cannabis, including legal possession amounts.
- Assume full responsibility for administration of non-medical cannabis.
- Advise their direct care providers when they have self-administered non-medical cannabis.
- Be aware that Fraser Health staff will not provide and/or procure non-medical cannabis.
- Adhere to related Fraser Health policies (e.g., [Smoke, Vapour, and Tobacco Free Premises - Corporate Policy](#)).
- Consult with their MRP if they feel their non-medical cannabis use could be causing problems for themselves or others.
- Engage family members, [essential care partners](#) or others to store and access their non-medical cannabis if personal secure individual locked storage is not available.
- Ensure that other persons we serve, essential care partners, and [visitors](#) do not have access and are not exposed to their non-medical cannabis.
- Following a conversation with unit and/or site leadership, you may request a consultation with [Professional Practice](#), [Ethics Services](#) and/or [Risk Management Services](#) in specific individual circumstances where further clarity is needed.
- **Storage**
  - Non-medical cannabis must always be stored in a [secure storage area](#).
  - Fraser Health is not responsible for any lost or stolen product.
  - Non-medical cannabis *may* be stored in an area located in the individuals care area provided that:
    - Secure storage areas are available in the patient care area.
    - The individual can access the storage area by themselves or through an essential care partner/support person.
    - The storage area is assigned only to one individual at a time; it is not a shared storage space.
    - The individual can self-administer or have an essential care partner or support person administer the non-medical cannabis for them as needed.
    - The individual's care area is sufficiently private so that self-administration of non-medical cannabis will not expose other persons we serve, staff, essential care partners, and/or visitors to secondary pharmacological effects or safety risks of cannabis.

### **DISPOSAL**

If the person we serve leaves the premises without their non-medical cannabis or if the individual is deceased, please follow the Health and Safety: [Unknown Substances Disposal and Spill Response](#) (Procedure A) for disposal instructions.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Cannabis Act:** Creates a strict legal framework for controlling the production, distribution, sale and possession of cannabis across Canada.

<b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - NON-MEDICAL PURPOSES</b>	<b>Page</b> <b>3 of 4</b>
----------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------

**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.

**Federally Licensed Seller:** A federal license is required to cultivate, process, and sell cannabis for medical or non-medical purposes. Individuals who are authorized by a health care professional can register to buy products from holders of a license for sale for medical purposes. See <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/getting-cannabis-from-licensed-producer/accessing-from-licensed-producer.html>

**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.

**Secure storage area:** Placing an item so it is not visible to others. This includes fixed, fastened, or locked storage that both protects the contents from tampering and prevents exposure, danger or risk (e.g., bedside drawer or individual closet).

## **REFERENCES**

1. Health Canada. Accessing cannabis for medical purposes from a licensed producer [Internet]. 2021 May. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/getting-cannabis-from-licensed-producer/accessing-from-licensed-producer.html>.
2. Health Canada. Cannabis Act [Internet]. 2022 September. Available from: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-24.5/>
3. Health Canada. Cannabis Legalization and Regulation [Internet]. 2021 July. Available from: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/cannabis/>
4. Health Canada. Final Regulations: Edible cannabis, cannabis extracts, cannabis topicals. 2019 December [Internet]. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/resources/regulations-edible-cannabis-extracts-topicals.html>.
5. Health Canada. Identifying Legal Cannabis Products [Internet]. 2022 June. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/laws-regulations/provinces-territories.html#a>

<b><u>POLICY</u></b> <b>CANNABIS - NON-MEDICAL PURPOSES</b>	Page 4 of 4
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6. The Cannabis Knowledge Exchange Hub. Untangling medical and non-medical cannabis [Internet]. 2021 March. Available from: <https://cannabis-hub.camhx.ca/resources/untangling-medical-and-non-medical-cannabis.html>.
7. Vancouver Coastal Health. Cannabis for Non-Medical Purposes Policy [Intranet]. 2022 August. Available from: <http://shop.healthcarebc.ca/vch/VCHPolicies/D-00-11-30087.pdf>

**APPENDICES:**

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

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

Version	Date	Comments / Changes
1.0	October 2018	Initial policy released
2.0	November 2023	Revision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose section               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rewritten to include 2018 updates to Federal Legislation including edible cannabis</li> <li>○ Updated to be a more concise statement</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Scope section               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Included new section to adhere to update DST template</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Policy Statements: Rewritten to provide clarity on               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expectations of <b>staff</b> when a patient/client/resident/tenant wants to use non-medical cannabis</li> <li>○ Expectations of patient/client/resident/tenant when using non-medical cannabis, including while receiving care in the home</li> <li>○ Storage of non-medical cannabis in Fraser Health settings broadly</li> <li>○ Reordered statement listing</li> <li>○ Cleaned up statements to make more concise</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Policy Statements: deleted               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Policy Statement 2 around compromising standards of practice as no other FHA policy allows nurses to compromise professional standards. Statement is implicit; does not need to be explicit</li> <li>○ Policy Statement 6 around overarching values moved to Appendix</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Definitions (removed): ACMPR, Narcotic Control Regulations</li> <li>• References: Updated</li> </ul>