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**TITLE: MEDICAL CANNABIS**

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**APPLICABILITY:** All sites and facilities

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**RELATED POLICIES:** 1-22-8-030: [Smoke Free Grounds](#)  
1-5-3-020: [Patient's Own Medication](#)

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**DEFINITIONS:** See [Definitions](#)

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**COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS:**

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**DOCUMENT QUICK LINKS**

- [BC College of Nursing Professionals Cannabis Resource Centre](#)
- [Canadian Controlled Drugs and Substances Act](#)
- [Canadian Narcotic Control Regulations](#)
- [Conditions of Use Agreement for Self-Administration of Cannabis for Medical Purposes](#) (10-300-5095)
- [Client Medication Record](#) (10-511-7002)
- [Sample of Medical Document for Cannabis for Medical Purposes](#) (Appendix A)
- [Secure Storage Options](#) (Appendix B)
- [Process Flow Algorithm for Cannabis for Medical Purposes in Acute Care](#) (10-110-6106)

**KEY POINTS**

- Northern Health (NH) is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for patients, visitors and employees.
- NH allows only non-smoking forms of medical cannabis in all facilities and grounds for continuing and new treatment. Patients wishing to smoke medical cannabis must leave NH property to smoke in a location where they do not affect other people.
- Medical cannabis is categorized as a controlled substance in Canada and its use as a medicine, with permission by Health Canada is legal. While dried cannabis is not an approved drug or medicine in Canada and the Government of Canada does not endorse the use of cannabis, the Supreme Court of Canada has recognized the right of patients to reasonable access to a legal source of cannabis when authorized by a healthcare practitioner.

- Health Canada limits the handling of controlled substances which includes cannabis through policies, guidelines and legislation such as the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA), the Narcotic Control Regulations (NCR). Under the *Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations*, an authorized healthcare practitioner includes physicians in all provinces and territories, where supporting dried marijuana for medical purposes is permitted under their scope of practice. \*Nurse Practitioners are not yet authorized to prescribe marijuana for medical purposes in B.C.<sup>1</sup>
- Cannabis preparations, derivatives, and similar synthetic preparations are listed under Schedule II of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* and are included in the definition of a controlled substance. Those wishing to engage in lawful activities must, therefore, be properly licensed and ensure that the controlled substances are adequately secured and safeguarded at all times for public safety and to minimize risks of diversion.
- On October 17, 2018, the federal government enacted the *Cannabis Act* (Bill C-45) to legalize the possession and use of cannabis. As clarity of direction unfolds, the Canadian Nurses Protective Society continues to advocate for clarity in the role of nurses concerning the administration of medical cannabis to their patients.

## **POLICY STATEMENT (ALL STAFF MUST COMPLY)**

NH staff shall not be involved in the procurement of medicinal cannabis for new or pre-existing use.

NH staff may assist the patient to securely store cannabis for medical purposes in a secured storage device (see [Appendix B](#)).

In the hospital (inclusive of Long Term Care and Assisted Living) setting, nurses (RN, LPN, RPN) are authorized to administer cannabis oil or fresh cannabis or dried cannabis that has been received from a licensed retailer or producer and not altered in an edible product (such as brownie/cookie/chocolate or gummy bear).

Non-smoking forms of medical cannabis must be consumed inside the patient's room and not in a shared area of the facility.

Patients will not share their medical cannabis with other patients, residents, visitors or family/designated caregivers.

Patient or their representative must sign the Conditions of Use Agreement for Self-Administration of Cannabis for Medical Purposes (#10-300-5095).

NH will allow the non-smoking forms only of Medicinal Cannabis for new or continuing use while on NH facility

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<sup>1</sup> Update for College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia (CRNBC) April 14<sup>th</sup> 2018 [Legislation Relevant to Nurses' Practice](#)  
[2 Subsection 348 of the Cannabis Regulations](#)

- In accordance with the [Smoke-Free Grounds](#) policy smoking medical cannabis on NH grounds is prohibited,

**The Most Responsible Prescriber is not obligated to continue a patient's existing medical cannabis prescription, and will do so only when, in their professional judgement, the treatment is safe and appropriate for the patient.**

- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC has issued a Professional Standard concerning [Cannabis for Medical Purposes](#) which sets some parameters for physician involvement. If a physician is unsure of their legal obligations, they can contact the Canadian Medical Protective Association for guidance.

## EQUIPMENT

- NH provides secured storage to store the prescribed medical cannabis (see [Appendix B.](#))
- Digital weigh scale

## CLINICAL PRACTICE STANDARD (ALWAYS USE PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT AND DOCUMENT ANY DEVIATION FROM THE STANDARD)

### Steps to the Procurement of Medical Cannabis

1. The Most Responsible Prescriber assesses the patient to determine if medical cannabis treatment needs to be continued or initiated given the patient's current medication condition and other therapies. The Most Responsible Prescriber may suggest switching to alternate cannabinoid available through the Pharmacy Department (Nabilone) or other non-cannabis treatment options.
2. If it is determined that medical cannabis will be prescribed, include the following information on a medical document:
  - Patient's personal address- medical cannabis to be sent directly to the patient at a previously identified personal address – do not use an NH address.
3. The amount of dried or oil of cannabis that the patient can possess is the lesser of thirty times the daily amount stipulated by the healthcare practitioner or 150 grams. Total cannot be greater than 30 day supply or 150 grams.
4. Law enforcement or facility security can ask the patient to demonstrate that they are in legal possession of the above listed forms of medical cannabis from a licensed producer by showing either:
  - the label on the cannabis package containing the specific patient information or
  - the separate document containing the same information which accompanied the shipment of cannabis.

5. Patient is to carry the abovementioned at all times.
6. All costs associated with medical cannabis are the patient's responsibility
7. See [Appendix A](#) for sample of medical document for the cannabis for medical purposes.

## DOCUMENTATION

If the physician agrees to support use of medical cannabis while in acute or long term care, they are to write an order for use of medical cannabis on the Physicians Order Sheet following the requirements of Safe Medication Order Writing including dose and dosing interval.

- The Most Responsible Prescriber provides a prescription for the patient to use for the procurement of medical cannabis. The amount prescribed in hospital must not exceed the amount authorized by Health Canada. See [Appendix A](#)
- Physician order is faxed/scanned to the pharmacy.
- Pharmacy enters the order for medical Cannabis as a patient's own medication, following the [Patient's Own Medication](#) policy.
- Patient or patient family/caregiver/designate to document (as accurately as possible) the date/time, amount, dosage form and frequency of use on the [Client Medication Administration Record](#) (10-511-7002).
- With the initiation of medical cannabis there is to be a corresponding care plan entry relating to the focus of care and expected outcomes.
- Copy of the Registration Certificate (if patient or Designate produce own supply) and/or
- Patient – specific label or shipping document if patient obtains supply from a Licensed Producer
- A photocopy of the medical document or label on the packaging or the document accompanying the medical cannabis shipment to be placed on the medication administration record
- A copy of the Conditions of Use Agreement (signed by patient)
- Scan the medical document or label on the packaging to the pharmacy department.

### Procedures:

#### 1.0) Responsibility of Patient or Designate:

- a) Sign Conditions of Use Agreement: Self-Administration of Cannabis for Medical Purposes Form (#10-300-5095)

- b) Adhere to criteria outlined on their Medical Document from Health Canada.
- c) Obtain a supply of Cannabis for Medical Purposes as outlined on their Medical Document and Registration Certificate (if patient or designate produces their own supply) or have a patient specific labelled supply from Licensed Producer.
- d) Obtain or refill their own supply of cannabis for medical purposes.
- e) Ensure all required documents are in the custody of the patient or patient's family at all times in order to verify patient's authorization to possess and use cannabis for medical purposes as needed.
- f) Ensure other patients, NH staff, and the public do not have access to cannabis for medical purposes or related paraphernalia.
- g) Do not share, distribute, or sell any supply of cannabis for medical purposes.
- h) Ensure the amount of cannabis for medical purposes in their possession is not greater than the Health Canada possession limit of the lesser of either 150 grams or a 30-day supply times the daily quality of Dried Marihuana (or the equivalent in cannabis products) expressed in grams which the patient is authorized to consume in accordance with their Medical Document.<sup>1</sup>
- i) Self-administer or have their designate or family member administer cannabis for medical purposes.
- j) Patient or patient family to document date/time, amount, dosage form and frequency of use of cannabis for medical purposes on Client Medication Administration Record.
- k) Notify nursing staff when cannabis for medical purposes is administered.
- l) Alert the nurse, Most Responsible Prescriber, clinical pharmacist or other NH staff member when there are concerns about side effects related to cannabis for medical purposes use.

## **2.0) Responsibility of Most Responsible Prescriber:**

- a) Assess the patient, review the patient's health record and have a discussion with the patient about continued use or if patient requests, the incorporation (new start) of cannabis for medical purposes while in acute care.
- b) Document the assessment and communication with the patient according to the standards of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC.

- c) Document the shared decision for patient to continue use or incorporate use (new starts) of cannabis for medical purposes in acute care OR document rationale if deemed medically unsafe to continue cannabis for medical purposes while in acute care
- d) Instruct patient to complete Conditions of Use Agreement: Self-Administration of Cannabis for Medical Purposes Form (#10-300-5095)
- e) Include copy of Medical Document and Registration Certificate (if applicable); or copy of Medical Document and patient-specific supply label or shipping document from Licensed Producer in the patient's health record.
- f) Monitor for ongoing efficacy, appropriateness, and safety of cannabis for medical purposes and potential or known interactions with other medications or medical interventions.
- g) Document use of cannabis for medical purposes in patient's health record for ongoing communication.
- h) Initiate and manage care planning conference if required.

### **3.0) Responsibility of Pharmacist:**

- a) When a clinical pharmacist is caring for a patient using cannabis for medical purposes while in acute care (as per usual care), they identify any potential or actual drug therapy problems and consult the Most Responsible Prescriber to ensure medication therapy is appropriate.
- b) Educate the patient on their diseases and medications, and promote medication adherence as required.
- c) Participate in patient care planning conference if initiated by Most Responsible Prescriber.

### **4.0) Responsibility of Nursing:**

- 1) Follow requirements for administration, storage and documentation outlined in this clinical practice standard.
- 2) Authenticate the substance including comparing substance labels and producer certificates with medical cannabis product.
- 3) Review dosage on label.
- 4) Instruct patient/patient family to document date/time, amount, dosage form and frequency of use of cannabis for medical purposes on the [Client Medication Record](#) (10-511-7002).

- 5) Document use of cannabis for medical purposes in patient's health record for ongoing communication
- 6) If cannabis is left in an NH facility after patient discharge:
  - Contact patient or delegate for retrieval
  - If retrieval not possible within 24 hours, send cannabis to Pharmacy Department for destruction.

## SECURITY AND STORAGE

Store Medical Cannabis in a lockable airtight container that limits transmission of odour inside a stored in a secured lockbox.

- Individual facilities collaborate with local Security Services, if available and operational leadership to establish a method for securing lock boxes (See [Appendix B](#)).
- Medical Cannabis is not to be stored on unit narcotics cupboards or medication cart.
- Secured storage requires use of a lockable cabinet/drawer or a room safe that is secured to a non-movable counter top.
- If moveable furniture is used then it is to be tethered to the wall so it cannot be easily removed from the room/site.
  - Ensure the tether is long enough to provide access to the head of the bed in the event of an emergency.
- The lock box may not be used for storing anything other than medical cannabis or clients own self-administered medications.
- The storage container is to enclose the original product label supplied with the medical cannabis which needs to include:
  - Name of the Licensed Producer and the brand name,
  - lot number,
  - potency (percentage) of ingredients,
  - net weight,
  - packaging date of the medical cannabis.

## LOSS OR THEFT OF MEDICAL CANNABIS:

- In the event of loss or theft of medical cannabis, the patient or staff contact the RCMP, and local Security Services (if available).
- NH Staff completes a Patient Safety and Learning System (PSLS) event, using the Security/Property event report form.
- Document the loss or theft in the patient record.

**UPON DISCHARGE:**

- Patient takes the medical cannabis with them as part of the discharge process;
  - Ensure all medications are returned to the patient, including narcotics and medical cannabis.
- If medical cannabis is left behind following discharge, contact the patient and request pick up as soon as possible. Inform patient that cannabis can only be held on the unit for 24 hours then to be sent for destruction.
- If the medical cannabis is not picked up within 24 hours, return the medical cannabis to pharmacy for destruction.

**UPON DEATH:**

- If the patient expires while admitted to a NH facility the medical cannabis is to be sent to pharmacy department for destruction.

**NON-COMPLIANCE/BREACH:**

- Non-compliance with this policy by the patient may result in the loss of eligibility to use medical cannabis while in an NH facility.
- In the event there is non-compliance with the policy, the Most Responsible Prescriber is contacted to convene a meeting including the patient, physician, nurse and potentially security depending on the nature of the breach.

**REFERENCES**

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## DEFINITIONS:

**Cannabis:** a hemp plant that grows throughout temperate and tropical climates in almost any soil condition; more commonly referred to as Cannabis or Marijuana. The dried flowering tops of the pistillate plants of Cannabis sativa (family Moraceae) containing isomerictetrahydrocannabinols, cannabinol, and cannabidiol.

Cannabis, its preparations and derivatives, including (1) Cannabis resin; (2) Cannabis (marihuana); (3) Cannabidiol (2- [3-methylethenyl]-2-cyclohexen-1-yl]-5-pentyl-1, 3-benzenediol) (4) Cannabinol (3-n-amy-6, 6, 9-trimethyl-6-dibenopyrna-1-ol) (5) and (6) [Repealed, SOR/2015-192, s.1] (7) Tetrahydrocannabinol (tetrahydro-6, 6, 9-trimethyl-3-pentyl-6H-dibenzo [b ,d]pyran-1-ol) (7.1) [Repealed, SOR/2015-192, s. 1] but not including (8) Non-viable Cannabis seed, with the exception of its derivatives (9) Mature Cannabis stalks that do not include leaves, flowers, seeds or branches; and fibre derived from such stalks

**Cannabinoid:** Substances similar to 9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) or acting through the cannabinoid receptors. Cannabinoids include phytocannabinoids produced by the Cannabis plant (e.g. Cannabinol, cannabidiol, cannabinolic acid, cannabigerol, cannabicyclol) as well as growing number of synthetic cannabinoid agents (Nabilone)

**Most Responsible Prescriber (MRP):** Must be a physician \*Nurse Practitioners are not yet authorized to prescribe marijuana for medical purposes in B.C.

**Vaporizer or Vaporized form:** Method by which the product is heated to the point where the medicinal ingredients are released into the air and can be subsequently inhaled. The product is not heated to the point of combustion which releases smoke and potential harmful by-products. The *Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act* forbids the use of Vaporizing on public grounds.

## KEYWORDS

Medical Cannabis, Cannabis, cannabis, cannabinoid, THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) marijuana, medical marijuana

## Appendix A

### Sample of Medical Document for the Cannabis for Medical Purposes

Health Canada [Sample Medical Document for the use of Cannabis for Medical Purposes under the Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations](#)

If another document is used it must contain all of the information below:

Patient's Given Name and Surname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Patient's Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_  
Daily quantity of dried Cannabis to be used by the patient: \_ g/day  
The period of use is \_\_\_ day(s) \_\_\_ week(s) \_\_\_ month(s).  
**NOTE: The period of use cannot exceed one year**  
Health care practitioner's given name and surname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Profession: \_\_\_\_\_  
Health care practitioner's business address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Full business address of the location at which the patient consulted the health care practitioner (if different than above): \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax Number (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Province(s) Authorized to Practice in: \_\_\_\_\_  
Health Care Practitioner's License number: \_\_\_\_\_

- Register and Order with a licensed producer.
- Once a medical document from the authorized healthcare practitioner is provided, the patient registers with the licensed producer of their choice.
- Application requirements are provided by the licensed producer.
- Once registered the patient can then order dried marijuana from the licensed producer.

### [Authorized Licensed Producers under the Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations](#)

## Appendix B

### Secured Storage Options

#### Option 1



[https://www.pharmasystems.com/index.php?route=product/product&path=88\\_150&product\\_id=3688](https://www.pharmasystems.com/index.php?route=product/product&path=88_150&product_id=3688)

#### PharmaSystems Keyless Entry Lockbox

Item #: 17848

- Ideal for storage of spill and clean up kits, personal protection kits or medication supplies.
- Electronic lock delivers outstanding security and immediate access control for contents.
- Users must enter the lock's four-digit code to gain access. Code can be changed as needed.
- Mounting keyholes are drilled under the handle for attaching to walls, carts and cabinets. Two mounting screws are included. The storage cabinet can also be permanently mounted using double-sided foam tape.
- Inside Dimensions: 7 inches wide x 7 inches height x 4 inches depth (178mm x 178mm x 102mm)
- Outside Dimensions Including Handle : 8-1/4 inches height x 7 inches wide x 4 inches depth (210mm x 178mm x 102mm)
- **NH item number to order via e-Rex: 5700477, Purchase cost: \$210.00 each**

## Option 2:

PharmaSystems Keyless Room Cabinet

**Item #: 3787**

**UPC: 063636 737870**

Rx Catalogue Page # 33:

[https://www.pharmasystems.com/index.php?route=product/product&path=88\\_150&product\\_id=2925](https://www.pharmasystems.com/index.php?route=product/product&path=88_150&product_id=2925)



- Ideal for storing valuables
- Keyless entry cabinet provides an affordable way to secure patient medications and personal items and eliminates the risk of lost or stolen keys
- One access code - electronic, push-button lock is easy to program and change when necessary - access code combination can be three to eight numbers
- Security and power status is indicated by LEDs with buzzer feedback for each operation
- Manual override key function available - two keys are supplied to open the cabinet in the event of battery failure
- Four AA batteries are included and required to operate the keypad
- Eight predrilled holes, four on the back and four in the bottom - for mounting to wall, floor or countertop
- Dimensions - 34.9 x 25.1 x 25.1 cm **(13.75 x 9.88 x 9.88 inches)**
- **NH item number to order via e-Rex: 5700125, Purchase cost: \$103.00 each**

The following will be available through eRex( NHA numbers pending)

**Option 3:**



/views



**Medication Box - Lockable Refrigerator Mount**

Item Number: 2109M

Email to a Friend

\*Color

Choose an Option...

\*Size

Choose an Option...

1

Add to Cart

Q

Bar chart icon

Price From: **\$135.00**

- Medication Box - Lockable Refrigerator Mount: Medication Box - Lockable Refrigerator Mount with Key Lock can also be configured with dividers (sold separately) to create separate storage compartments within the box
- Helps comply with Joint Commission regulations to keep high risk medications locked up at all times
- High density polyethylene box resists most solvents & chemicals
- Boxes mount securely in refrigerators to prevent medication theft
- All boxes complete with predrilled holes and mounting kit for wire refrigerators
- Also comes with adhesive mounting strips for glass refrigerators
- Choose from four different sizes; Inside box dimensions are approximately 1.5" less than the outside dimensions listed for the Length and Width and .5" for the Height.

Boxes are autoclavable up to 250 degrees

#### Option 4:

This Medication Box comes with mounting hardware and is designed for the storage of insulin and other refrigerated medicines:



#### Description

- Constructed of durable clear acrylic
- Pre-drilled for mounting to underside of wire, glass shelves or cabinets (mounting hardware included)
- Multiple units keyed the same
- Latex free product
- Overall Dimensions: 4.25" H x 12" W x 6" D

#### Option 5:

Locking refrigerator storage box – Stainless Steel or Acrylic:

#### Small Locking Refrigerator Storage Box, Stainless Steel (3725)

- **Secure, Space Saving Design** - Small box is great for small units. Mounting bracket can only be accessed when the door is open. Refrigerator Boxes are available with stainless steel or acrylic frame; gray styrene or clear acrylic drawer; multiple lock options (Key Lock, Slam Lock, Combination Lock or Padlock). Frames include predrilled holes for security seals or padlocks.
- **Construction** - Stainless Steel Box w/ Gray Styrene Drawer and Key Lock.
- **Includes:**
  - Mounting kit (self-locking nuts, bolts, metal mounting brackets)
  - Double-sided tape
  - One lock, 2 keys per lock (units keyed differently)
- **Dimensions:**

