



Letter Regarding Medical Cannabis and Workplace Safety:

To Whom It May Concern,

Since 2001, Canadian patients have had the legal right to use medical cannabis. Under current regulations patients must obtain medical cannabis from a government regulated licensed producer, and only after they have obtained a recommendation and signed medical document from a licensed healthcare provider.

Cannabis science does not currently provide enough evidence to dictate a strict regimen for frequency and dosage of medical use. Additionally, there are multiple formulations and varieties of medical cannabis products available, some of which could cause impairment. Medical providers have no strict control on which products patients purchase or use. Therefore, individual medical cannabis use, and side effects of such use, vary tremendously from one patient to another.

Consequently, it is not possible for a medical cannabis provider to make specific recommendations or assessments with regards to workplace safety. Each employer must follow their own policies and procedures when it comes to these issues.

From a safety standpoint there are numerous factors to consider, but the ultimate question is related to the presence or absence of impairment. As with any prescription medication, an employee is usually deemed unfit for work if they are impaired by the medication. Multiple prescription and non-prescription medicines are known to cause impairment, and existing workplace safety guidelines are in place to address their use. In terms of risk assessment, each employer must address safety sensitive work issues relating to a worker's use of any medication, including cannabis. Should a fitness for duty medical examination be required, this should be performed by a specialist in occupational medicine.

From an alcohol and drug testing perspective, users of medical cannabis may or may not test positive due to the lack of available tests for some forms of cannabis medicine. Additionally, chronic users of medical cannabis may test positive on urine or blood tests days or weeks after last known use. Unlike alcohol, no specific laboratory tests values for cannabis correlate with impaired function.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of each employer to determine its own policies and it is not within the purview or ability of Natural Health Services Ltd., or associated health care providers, to make a determination as to whether a medical cannabis patient is "fit for work".

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