

CATEGORY:	CLIENT/PATIENT/RESIDENT CARE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
SUB-CATEGORY:	MEDICATION POLICIES
GROUP:	
DISTRIBUTION:	STAFF IN LONG TERM CARE, RURAL HEALTH, MEDICAL SERVICES, POPULATION HEALTH (Mental Health Unit only) AND PATIENT SERVICES
TITLE:	MEDICAL CANNABIS

PURPOSE

To outline Western Health’s position regarding the use of medical cannabis within Western Health’s hospitals and Long Term Care facilities, including:

- Appropriate use and compliance with regulations,
- Access and administration,
- Security and storage,
- Documentation, and
- Roles and responsibilities of Western Health staff, patients, residents and family/support person(s).

POLICY

Western Health recognizes that there are evolving treatments for disease processes. Medical cannabis is a federally regulated treatment that may be prescribed for patients/residents receiving care within Western Health facilities. Western Health is committed to the safe control, administration and storage of patients’/residents’ medical cannabis when it is medically indicated and prescribed by a physician or nurse practitioner. This policy will assist staff in ensuring the patient/resident receives their prescribed treatment but also stays within safe parameters for all patients/residents, visitors and staff. This includes protection from the risk of cannabis smoke exposure and the possibility of a fire or explosion associated with combustion of cannabis in or on Western Health premises.

Western Health is committed to ensuring patient and resident involvement in decision making and permits the use of medical cannabis when:

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- The most responsible physician (MRP) or nurse practitioner has completed an order which permits the patient to bring medical cannabis into the facility and to consume medical cannabis,
- The patient or resident holds and maintains a valid Proof of Authorization,
- The medical cannabis is accompanied by the labeled container from the Licensed Producer,
- The patient/resident is able to store it securely within the facility, and
- The patient/resident is able to self-administer or have the support of a family member/support person to administer.

Compliance with Regulations

Use of medical cannabis on Western Health premises must comply with Cannabis Legislation, Western Health's [Smoke Free Properties policy](#), and this policy. Only medical cannabis obtained with the appropriate licenses from a Licensed Producer may be accessed by the patient or resident while in Western Health facilities.

Possession Amount

In accordance with Cannabis Legislation, a person may only possess the lesser of 150g and 30 times the authorized daily quantity of medical cannabis.

Location of Use

Use of medical cannabis that is smoked or vaporized is not permitted on Western Health property, in accordance with Western Health's Smoke Free Properties policy. Consumable forms of medical cannabis must be prepared (if applicable) and consumed inside of the patient or resident's room, and not in a shared/public area of the facility.

Access and Administration

Western Health does not supply medical cannabis. Patients and residents using medical cannabis must have their own supply and be able to self-administer. If the patient/resident is unable to self-administer, a family member or support person may assist with the administration of the medical cannabis. Western Health staff are not required to directly handle or assist with administration of medical cannabis. Staff are not required to provide information on how to prepare consumable forms of medical cannabis and may direct the patient/resident to their Licensed Producer for information. Western Health does not assume liability for patients or residents who leave its premises to access/smoke/vape medical cannabis.

Security and Storage

Medical cannabis must be stored in a secure locked storage container (lock box) that limits transmission of odor, located in the patient or resident's room. Lock boxes are provided by Western Health and must be signed out by the patient/resident/substitute decision maker using the sign in/sign out sheet (Form #900-610). The lock box must enclose the original product label which includes the name of the Licensed Producer, the brand name, lot number, potency (percentage) of ingredients, net weight, and packaging date of the medical cannabis.

Documentation

Proof of Authorization for use of medical cannabis must include:

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- The patient/resident’s full name,
- The name of the prescriber who provided the medical documents,
- The name and contact information of the Licensed Producer, if applicable,
- The patient/resident’s daily quantity to be used in grams, and
- The expiry date of the patient/resident’s registration.

A photocopy of the Proof of Authorization must be placed in the medication order section of the medical record and faxed to the pharmacy. The patient/resident’s use of medical cannabis will be documented on medication history/medication reconciliation forms. The Medication Administration Record (MAR) will indicate the patient/resident’s own use of medical cannabis, for the purposes of communication only. Individual doses self-administered by the patient/resident will be documented on the [Patient Medication Self-Administration Record](#) by the patient/resident or family member/support person who is administering the medical cannabis, in accordance with policy [15-03-50 Medications – Self Administration](#).

Roles and Responsibilities

Patient

- Maintain their possession and provide Proof of Authorization to possess medical cannabis
- Ensure secure storage and labeling of medical cannabis in compliance with this policy
- Understand and cooperate with the terms of the [Smoke Free Properties policy](#)
- Self-administer medical cannabis at prescribed doses and intervals and document on the [Patient Medication Self-Administration Record](#)
- Ensure that only medical cannabis obtained with the appropriate licenses from a Licensed Producer will be brought into Western Health facilities

Family/Support Person(s)

- When a patient/resident does not have the ability to self-administer medical cannabis, a family member or support person may assist with handling and administration of medical cannabis while in the presence of the patient. This person may not possess more than the daily quantity the patient/resident has been authorized to use
- If assisting with patient/resident administration or handling, the family/support person(s) must follow all terms and conditions of the [Smoke Free Properties policy](#)

Most Responsible Physician or Nurse Practitioner

- Determine if medical cannabis therapy, in his/her professional judgment, is appropriate for the patient/resident in their current circumstance
- Reassess continuation/discontinuation of medical cannabis if clinically indicated in consultation with the patient/resident/substitute decision maker (SDM) and document the discussion(s) in the health record
- Inform patient/resident of Medical Cannabis policy requirements by reviewing Medical Cannabis Client Information and Waiver Form (Form #12-3875). Ensure signing of waiver is completed and a copy is placed on the health record.

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Nurse

- Obtain a copy of the Proof of Authorization and ensure the medical cannabis has been obtained from an authorized Licensed Producer
- Document the patient/resident's use of medical cannabis on the Best Possible Medication History form
- Obtain MRP's order and document on the MAR to indicate that the patient may self-administer medical cannabis
- Ensure the patient/resident or family member/support person documents self-administration of medical cannabis on the [Patient Medication Self-Administration Record](#) and place the completed form on the health record
- Advise the patient/resident regarding storage and security of medical cannabis
- Provide a lock box and retain a secondary access key for patients/residents meeting the requirements of medical cannabis use within this policy. Ensure the lock box is signed out using the sign in/sign out sheet (Form #900-610).

Pharmacy

- Provide staff/patients/residents with information about possible drug interactions and/or contraindications to therapy, as well as information about alternative products for treatment/symptom management.

DEFINITIONS

Licensed Producer – Refers to the holder of a license issued under ACMPR. Only producers who are authorized to produce and sell to the public may sell or provide cannabis to eligible persons. A list of licensed producers can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/industry-licensees-applicants/licensed-cultivators-processors-sellers.html>

Medical Cannabis – Cannabis grown by an authorized licensed producer in conditions that provide quality controlled cannabis for medical purposes as per ACMPR. Medical cannabis can be administered using a variety of methods. These can include capsule, smoking of dried buds, vaporizing, eating extracts, or using oral sprays.

Nurse – Refers to a Licensed Practical Nurse, Registered Nurse or Nurse Practitioner.

Proof of Authorization – Refers to the patient's/resident's license to possess medical cannabis

Routes of Administration – Refers to known methods for consumption. These include capsule, smoking of dried buds, vaporizing, eating extracts, or using oral sprays.

Most Responsible Physician (MRP) – the physician who assumes overall accountability for a patient during a stay in an acute care bed.

PROCEDURE

On Admission:

1. Patient/resident or SDM is required to disclose current use and make known their desire to continue use of medical cannabis.
2. The Registered Nurse (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) completes medication reconciliation to include the daily dose in grams of medical cannabis, the route of administration, and frequency of use.
3. The RN or LPN will discuss Western Health's Smoke Free Properties Policy, [Policy # 6-01-50: Smoke Free Properties](#) with the patient/resident or SDM.
4. The RN or LPN asks for Proof of Authorization and a labelled container supplied by the Licensed Producer. The RN or LPN then verifies that it is from a Licensed Producer. A copy of the Proof of Authorization will be kept in the patient's/resident's official medical record. When proof cannot be provided, the RN or LPN advises the patient that the unauthorized product must be returned home. If the patient or resident is non-compliant or unable to send the product home, the RN or LPN notifies the manager. The manager meets with the patient/resident to review the policy and ensures that arrangements are made to have the unauthorized product returned home or removed from the premises.

Administration:

1. Self Administration:

- 1.1 When a patient/resident is able to self-administer, a lock box will be provided. The medical cannabis is required to stay inside the locked box at all times until usage.
- 1.2 The patient/resident is required to be able to self-administer using the known administration routes.
- 1.3 The patient/resident is required to adhere to Western Health's Smoke Free Property Policy, [Policy # 6-01-50: Smoke Free Properties](#).
- 1.4 Patients/residents are responsible to clean and maintain all instruments and storage containers (lock box) used for medical cannabis.
- 1.5 Patients/residents are responsible to return all medical cannabis and paraphernalia to the lock box located inside their room immediately after use.
- 1.6 It is important that patients/residents not give medical cannabis to others. It is for the use of the registered user only.

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- 1.7 Patients/residents are responsible to maintain in their possession the Proof of Authorization to possess medical cannabis.
- 1.8 Patients/residents will ensure that all medical cannabis is obtained legally from a Licensed Producer.
- 1.9 Patients/residents who do not adhere to this policy, risk loss of eligibility to use medical cannabis in Western Health Facilities.

2. Staff Administration:

- 2.1 Nursing staff are not required to directly handle, administer, or assist to administer medical cannabis. If a patient/resident becomes unable to self-administer, it is the responsibility of a family member or support person to assist administration.
- 2.2 In the case of smoked or vaporized routes of administration of medical cannabis and the patient/resident becomes unable to go outside independently and follow Western Health's Smoke Free Properties Policy, [Policy # 6-01-50: Smoke Free Properties](#), the RN or LPN may seek a route of administration change with the Prescriber. Oral forms such as nabilone (Cesamet) and nabiximols (Sativex) may be considered.

Storage:

1. The RN or LPN will request a lock box for the patient/resident who has medical cannabis prescribed to them and is self-administering within the parameters of this policy. These lock boxes will be available in medication rooms and are required to be signed out for each patient/resident by using the Lock Box Sign in/Sign out Sheet (Form #900-610).
2. The lock box will store the medical cannabis at all times when not in use. The original product label will be kept inside the lock box and include the name of the producer, brand name, lot number, potency, weight, and packaging date.
3. The lock box cannot contain any other objects not directly involved with medical cannabis use.
4. When the patient/resident is finished with the lock box, it is to be emptied, properly cleaned and returned to the nurse. The nurse is responsible for ensuring it has been cleaned properly by the resident/patient and then wiping the inside and outside of the box with a disinfectant wipe. The nurse then dates and initials the Lock Box Sign in/Sign out Sheet to confirm that the lock box has been returned, and places it in the appropriate location inside the medication room.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

[Cannabis Regulations 2019](#)

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FORMS

[Lock Box Sign in/Sign out Sheet \(Form # 900-610\)](#)

[Medical Cannabis Client Information and Waiver Form \(Form # 12-3875\)](#)

KEYWORDS

Medical Cannabis

TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF IN QUALITY DEPARTMENT

<p>Approved By:</p> <p>Vice President – Patient Services</p> <p>Vice President – Medical Services</p> <p>Vice President – Long Term Care, Rural Health & Quality</p> <p>Vice President – Population Health & Human Resources</p>	<p>Maintained By:</p> <p>Regional Medication Safety Committee co-chairs</p>
<p>Effective Date:</p> <p>16/May/2019</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised: 18/July/2019</p>
<p>Review Date:</p> <p>18/July/2022</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Replaces: <i>(Indicates name and number of policy being replaced)</i> OR</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New:</p>