

APA Official Actions

Position Statement Against the Use of Cannabis for PTSD

Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2019

Approved by the Assembly, May 2019

“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . .” – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

The use of cannabis for medical indications has received considerable attention as several states have moved to legalize cannabis for various purposes. A growing number of patients cite PTSD as the reason for seeking cannabis for medical purposes in states where it is legal. Furthermore, approximately 15% of Veterans who are treated in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) outpatient PTSD clinics report recent (past 6 months) cannabis use. This position statement was developed through review of the evidence to date and to establish the APA's consensus on the matter.

APA Position:

Because of the lack of any credible studies demonstrating clinical effectiveness, the APA cannot endorse the use of medical cannabis for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The Council on Addiction Psychiatry, the Council on Research, and the Council on Quality Care reviewed available evidence regarding the use of cannabis in the treatment of PTSD and concluded that no published evidence of sufficient quality exists in the medical literature to support the practice.

The APA does not endorse cannabis for treatment of PTSD at this time, as further study is needed.