



Marijuana for Medical Purposes

A Presentation and Q&A

Stakeholder Summit
May 9, 2016



Purpose

Our aim today:

To gain your input and feedback to assist Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) as we review our processes and establish an informed and evidence-based Policy on marijuana for medical purposes.

Overview:

- Context
- Numbers
- Work Underway (3 Phases)
- Your opinion



Context

- Since 2008, VAC has covered the costs of marijuana for medical purposes for eligible Veterans (with physician or health care practitioner authorization).
- 2014, Health Canada amended regulations lessening certain controls on access (in the earlier days only a specialist could approve).
- In his spring 2016 report on VAC's Drug Benefits, the Auditor General recommended that we explore ways in which the costs associated with marijuana for medical purposes can be contained.
- Veteran recipient and expenditure numbers have risen dramatically.
- The high daily dosage amounts have raised concern about the health, safety and well-being of our Veterans (immediate and long-term health effects).



Veterans Affairs Canada

www.vac-acc.gc.ca

What are the numbers telling us?

Expenditures and Veteran recipients – Timeline

Fiscal Year	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Veterans	5	15	23	37	68	112	628	1,762
Expenditures	\$19K	\$43K	\$63K	\$103K	\$285K	\$409K	\$5.2M	\$20.5M

Source: VAC Corporate Statistics – as of April 4, 2016
Numbers do not include RCMP



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What are the numbers telling us?

Facts for 2015-2016: Of the 1,762 Veteran recipients:

Grams Reimbursed (per Veteran/per day)

1g-2g:	250
3g-4g:	331
5g-6g:	477
7g-8g:	169
9g-10g:	536
10+g:	7

Case Managed

Current: 969

Disability Benefit Conditions*

Musculoskeletal:	2,852
PTSD:	1,204
Other Mental Health:	495
Pain:	430
Fractures/Injuries:	399
Alcoholism:	33

*Veterans may have multiple conditions

Source: VAC Corporate Statistics – as of April 4, 2016
Numbers do not include RCMP



Work Underway

- Concern for the well-being of Veterans compels action
- March 2016 – began an Internal Review to contribute to an informed and evidence-based policy
- Internal Review comprises a three-phased approach



Phase 1 – Internal Review

1. Internal Management Review

- Analysis of statistical data regarding marijuana for medical purposes is underway.
- Comprehensive Literature Review is underway.
 - Legislative and Regulatory Framework
- Comparison to foreign countries is underway.
- Client profile is complete.



Phase 2 – Consultation

2. Consultation with Veterans and Stakeholders and other interested parties

- Discussions with Licensed Producers – April 15th to 19th
- Discussion with Medical Expert Panel – April 18th
- Discussion with Veteran Stakeholders – today's Veteran's Summit May 9th
- Discussions with Beneficiaries – May 11th



Phase 3 – Decision and Policy

- **Phases 1 and 2 will inform the Policy Phase**
- Health Canada and the Department of Justice will be consulted at key points through VAC's Review.
- Interim policy development continues and will be informed as additional information becomes available.
- End result - an informed evidence-based decision.
- Policy development continues and results will be communicated.



Your contribution – Q&A

- This Veterans Summit a key piece of Phase 2 – Consultation
- VAC needs your assistance and feedback
- Open the floor for questions and answers
- Later this afternoon during the breakout sessions – some of you will be asked the following question:
 - ***With the health needs and well-being of your colleagues in mind, if Veterans Affairs Canada were to move forward with a policy on the use of marijuana for medical purposes, what would you like to see incorporated in the policy?***