



MEMO

Date: November 1, 2018

To: Program Directors

cc: Program Administrators

From: Dr. Ravi Sidhu, Associate Dean
Postgraduate Medical Education
Faculty of Medicine, UBC

Re: Cannabis Legalization and Usage

Dear all,

As you are all aware by now, recreational use of cannabis was legalized as of October 17.

Legalized cannabis use is new territory but clear expectations around avoidance of impairment at work have been around for a long time. As a resident at UBC you are a Health Authority employee, College of Physician and Surgeon (CPSBC) registrant, and a member of the UBC Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) Program.

At the current time, UBC PGME feels that it is important to remind residents about their professional obligation to not practice while impaired. Specifically, CPSBC has published an update to its practice standard as related to practicing without impairment.

The update can be found here:

<https://www.cpsbc.ca/for-physicians/college-connector/2016-V06-05/02>

In this memo, the CPSBC references the Canadian Armed Forces policy of prohibiting cannabis within eight hours of starting work and within twenty-four hours of performing any 'safety sensitive' activity.

The CPSBC also references the Occupational and Environmental Medical Association of Canada announcement that "until further evidence is available, it is not advisable to operate motor vehicles

or equipment, or engage in other safety sensitive tasks for 24 hours following cannabis consumption, or for longer if impairment persists.”

The daily work of a resident does include many “safety sensitive” tasks.

The CPSBC memo points out that the impairment effect of cannabis is widely variable and that “registrants are not permitted to consume cannabis if the immediate or lasting effect impacts their work.”

As Health Authority Employees, residents are reminded that policies within each Health Authority are consistent with the principle that employees be removed from the workplace if there is a reasonable suspicion of impairment. Health authorities also will support employees with a substance use disorder in their recovery and return to the workplace.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

RS Sidhu MD MEd FRCS(C)
Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education
Associate Professor, Department of. Surgery
The University of British Columbia