



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2019/0128, 17 May 2019

Medicinal cannabis under prescription

By Dr Sarah Barber
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Summary

This pack has been prepared ahead of the debate to be held in the Commons Chamber on Monday 20 May 2019 on medical cannabis under prescription. The subject for the debate has been selected by the Backbench Business Committee and the motion to be debated, in the names of Sir Mike Penning MP and Tonia Antoniazzi MP, is

That this House re-affirms its welcome of the change in the law which allows for access to medical cannabis under prescription but notes that only a handful of prescriptions for whole plant extract medical cannabis have been issued on the NHS which has left a significant number of patients, many of them children with intractable epilepsy, with no access causing significant distress; and calls on the Government to take further immediate action to ensure that medical cannabis is made available to appropriate patients, in particular to the children suffering severe intractable epilepsy similar such as that afflicting children like such as Alfie Dingley whose plight and campaign did so much to secure the change in the law.

Please see the Library's Briefing Paper on [Medical Use of Cannabis](#) in conjunction with this pack.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

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1. News and journal articles

Times [subscription]

Cannabis boy Billy Caldwell denied more epilepsy drugs

17 May 2019

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/cannabis-boy-billy-caldwell-denied-more-epilepsy-drugs-lclfdhg5c>

iNews

Alfie Dingley's mother says she still can't access the cannabis her son needs, causing him to have life-threatening seizures again

17 May 2019

<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/mother-of-alfie-dingley-says-she-still-cant-access-the-medical-cannabis-her-son-needs-causing-him-to-have-seizures-again/>

Pharmaceutical Journal

Pharma industry should fund trials for medical cannabis, chief medical officer tells MPs

21 March 2019

https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/news/pharma-industry-should-fund-trials-for-medical-cannabis-chief-medical-officer-tells-mps/20206322_article?firstPass=false

BBC News Online

Medicinal cannabis: 'Patients still in limbo'

19 March 2019

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-47630529>

Independent

UK's first medical cannabis clinic opens in Greater Manchester

10 March 2019

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/medical-cannabis-uk-greater-manchester-cheadle-the-beeches-treatment-a8816011.html>

BMJ

Medical cannabis: no NHS patients have benefited from law change, say campaigners

15 February 2019

<https://www.bmj.com/content/364/bmj.l753>

Pharmaceutical Journal

Data on NHS medicinal cannabis prescribing expected by end of March 2019

17 January 2019

<https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/news/data-on-nhs-medicinal-cannabis-prescribing-expected-by-end-of-march-2019/20205989.article?firstPass=false>

Guardian

UK doctors will be able to prescribe cannabis medicine next month

11 October 2018

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/oct/11/uk-to-allow-doctors-to-prescribe-cannabis-based-medicine-epilepsy-sajid-javid>

Pharmaceutical Journal

Government's second review recommends rescheduling cannabis

20 July 2018

<https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/news/governments-second-review-recommends-rescheduling-cannabis/20205212.article?firstPass=false>

2. Press releases

National Institute for Health Research

Are cannabis-based products effective for medicinal use?

12 October 2018

Researchers are being asked to investigate the effectiveness of cannabis-based products for medicinal use under a new NIHR themed research call.

Investigators can submit their research proposals to look at the use of products for difficult-to-treat epilepsy or other disorders unresponsive to existing treatments.

Applications should meet all the professional and legal requirements within which cannabis-based products for medicinal use may be prescribed and lead to robust clinical evidence that will inform practice.

The invitation for applications comes following a [review](#) of the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Dame Sally Davies, to the UK Government. The review considered a range of evidence from a number of international sources and recommended that the whole class of cannabis based medicinal products be moved out of Schedule 1 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations.

Following the review, the [Home Office announced that specialist clinicians would be able to legally prescribe cannabis-derived medicinal products by autumn](#).

For further details about this research call visit the [themed calls page](#).

Home Office

Government announces that medicinal cannabis is legal

Patients can be prescribed medicinal cannabis by specialist doctors from 1 November 2018.

11 October 2018

For the first time in the UK, expert doctors have been given the option to legally issue prescriptions for cannabis-based medicines when they agree that their patients could benefit from this treatment.

The law change, laid in Parliament today, came after the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, listened to concerns from parents of children with conditions such as severe epilepsy.

Over the summer he called for an urgent review of cannabis-based medicinal products and accepted recommendations that followed from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) and the UK's Chief Medical Adviser.

The new law will not limit the types of conditions that can be considered for treatment and doctors will no longer need to seek approval from an expert panel in order for patients to access the medicines.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Having been moved by heartbreaking cases involving sick children, it was important to me that we took swift action to help those who can benefit from medicinal cannabis.

We have now delivered on our promise and specialist doctors will have the option to prescribe these products where there is a real need.

I'm grateful to the expert panel – who have been considering cases in the interim – and to those who've worked hard to bring about this change at the earliest possible opportunity.

The decision to prescribe these unlicensed medicines must be made by a specialist doctor – not a GP. These doctors focus on one field of medicine such as neurology or paediatrics and are listed on the General Medical Council's specialist register. They must make decisions on prescribing cannabis-based products for medicinal use on a case-by-case basis, and only when the patient has an unmet special clinical need that cannot be met by licensed products.

Patients under the care of a specialist should discuss their treatment plan with them.

NHS England, the British Paediatric Neurology Association and the Royal College of Physicians will provide clinical advice to doctors ahead of the law change. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has been commissioned to develop more detailed guidelines for clinicians in the longer term.

President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Professor Ashok Soni OBE, said:

This news will be welcomed by many patients with serious health conditions.

The prospect of a future where safe and effective licensed cannabis-based medicines can be prescribed to help relieve suffering is genuinely exciting.

We will work with the NHS to help support specialists in making the right prescribing decisions.

The Home Secretary has made it clear that today's announcement does not pave the way towards legalising cannabis for recreational use. The penalties for unauthorised supply and possession will remain unchanged.

Home Office

Statement on review by Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

19 July 2018

Following the [Home Secretary's commission earlier this month](#), the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has today (Thursday 19 July) [published its short-term review](#) on the scheduling of cannabis-derived medicinal products.

The Council has recommended that such products should be placed in Schedule 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001, once they have been properly defined by the Government. It has said that there is evidence of medicinal benefits of some of these products in certain circumstances.

Earlier this month, Professor Dame Sally Davies, Chief Medical Officer and Chief Medical Advisor for the UK Government, [issued a report](#) which formed part 1 of the Government review announced on 19 June.

Dame Sally examined existing research into the therapeutic and medicinal benefits of cannabis-related medicinal products. She concluded that there is evidence of therapeutic benefit for some conditions.

The ACMD has not reassessed the evidence issued by Dame Sally and the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, will fully consider her advice, together with the advice from the ACMD.

Commenting on the review, Mr Javid said:

I am grateful to the Chief Medical Advisor for her review of the medicinal and therapeutic benefits of cannabis and to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs for their short-term advice on scheduling.

I am carefully considering both recommendations and will make a decision shortly.

In the meantime, specialist clinicians can apply to [the independent expert panel](#) on behalf of those individuals with an exceptional clinical need to access cannabis-related medicinal products.

3. Parliamentary material

Written statement

[Rescheduling of cannabis-based products for medicinal use](#)

Sajid Javid (The Secretary of State for the Home Department):

Today, the Government is laying the Misuse of Drugs (Amendments) (Cannabis and Licence Fees) (England, Wales and Scotland) Regulations 2018 (“the 2018 Regulations”) in the House. These regulations reschedule cannabis-based products for medicinal use and will come into force on 1 November 2018.

On 19 June, I announced a two-part review to look at the scheduling of cannabis-related medicinal products under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 (the 2001 Regulations). I have been clear that my intention was always to ensure that patients have access to the most appropriate course of medical treatment. I stressed the importance of acting swiftly to ensure that where medically appropriate, these products could be available to be prescribed to patients. I have been clear that this should be achieved at the earliest opportunity whilst ensuring that the appropriate safeguards were in place to minimise the risks of misuse and diversion.

Building on the expert advice we have received, first from the Chief Medical Adviser to the UK Government and then the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), the regulations we have laid today give effect to my commitments. I outline in this statement, the main features of our approach.

The 2018 Regulations introduce a definition of ‘cannabis-based product for medicinal use in humans’. Only products meeting this definition will be rescheduled to Schedule 2 to the 2001 Regulations and de-designated from the 2015 Designation Order. Any product which does not satisfy this definition will remain a Schedule 1 drug and only be available under a Home Office licence.

To constitute a ‘cannabis-based product for medicinal use in humans’, a product must satisfy three requirements:

1. It needs to be a preparation or product which contains cannabis, cannabis resin, cannabidiol or a cannabidiol derivative;
2. It is produced for medicinal use in humans and;
3. Is a medicinal product, or a substance or preparation for use as an ingredient of, or in the production of an ingredient of, a medicinal product

Whilst the evidence base further develops and clinical expertise builds, the Government believes it is important that access to these products is strictly controlled so as to prevent unintended misuse, harm and diversion. The 2001 Regulations therefore only allow three access routes

for the order, supply and use of these products by patients. These are as follows:

1. A special medicinal product for use in accordance with a prescription or direction of a doctor (who has made the decision to prescribe) on the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council;
2. An investigational medicinal product without marketing authorisation for use in a clinical trial or;
3. A medicinal product with a marketing authorisation.

This brings these products explicitly into the existing medicines framework. There are well-established mechanisms for the supply of unlicensed medicines to patients with exceptional needs. Unlicensed medicines of this sort are known as “specials” and can only be manufactured in or imported into the UK by a manufacturer or wholesale dealer that has a licence from the MHRA to do so and are expected to meet standards of good manufacturing practice (GMP).

The decision to prescribe is only restricted to a doctor on the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council where the cannabis-based product is an unlicensed ‘special’ medicinal product for use by a specific patient. Once a product is licensed by the MHRA, it will be available for prescription in the same way as any other Schedule 2 drug.

I have been consistently clear that I have no intention of legalising the recreational use of cannabis. To take account of the particular risk of misuse of cannabis by smoking and the operational impacts on enforcement agencies, the 2018 Regulations continue to prohibit smoking of cannabis, including of cannabis-based products for medicinal use in humans.

Until recently, licences for Schedule 1 drugs were generally issued for research purposes. As we have seen in recent cases, there may be exceptional circumstances which would require a Schedule 1 licence to be issued for medicinal or treatment purposes. In the exceptional event that an individual will need to be issued a Schedule 1 licence for treatment, the 2018 Regulations will ensure that the Secretary of State can determine that no fee should be paid in that case.

Until the changes come into force on 1 November 2018, the Independent Expert Panel, set up to provide me with clinical advice on individual licence applications, will remain in place to consider any application received before then.

These provisions will apply to England, Wales and Scotland. My officials continue to engage closely with the Department for Health in Northern Ireland, which intends to mirror these legislative amendments.

These regulations are not an end in themselves. The ACMD will be conducting a long-term review of cannabis and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has been commissioned to provide advice for clinicians by October next year. The Government will monitor

the impact of the policy closely as the evidence-base develops and review when the ACMD provides its final advice.

Further explanation of the legislative changes is set out in the Explanatory Memorandum to the regulations.

HC Deb 11 October 2018 | HCWS994

Debates

Commons Urgent Question: [Access to Medical Cannabis](#)

Urgent question on the return of medical cannabis that was seized from Emma Appleby at Southend airport on Saturday 6 April and which is needed to treat her very ill daughter Teagan's extreme epilepsy, and to take steps to make sure that medical cannabis is available for prescription around this great country.

HC Deb 08 April 2019 | Vol 658 cc84-41

Repeated in the Lords: [Access to Medicinal Cannabis](#)

HL Deb 09 April 2019 | Vol 797 cc451-5

Lords exchange of questions [Cannabis: Medicinal Use](#)

HL Deb 04 March 2019 | Vol 796 c440-

Lords exchange of questions [Cannabis: Medicinal Use](#)

HL Deb 16 July 2018 | Vol 792 c1049-

Lords exchange of questions [Cannabis-based Medicines](#)

HL Deb 21 June 2018 | Vol 791 c2101-

Commons Urgent Question [Medicinal Cannabis](#)

Urgent question on the granting of an emergency licence to allow the return of medical cannabis for Billy Caldwell.

HC Deb 18 June 2018 | Vol 643 cc26-40

PQs

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Penning, Sir Mike

engaging with in the process evaluation on prescribing cannabis-based products for medical use.

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the timeframe is for the process evaluation being undertaken by the NHS on prescribing cannabis-based products for medical use; and if he will he make a statement.

Answering member: Seema Kennedy | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

NHS England has been asked to provide an interim report to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care by the end of May 2019. The review will be clinically led by the NHS England and NHS Improvement Medical Director and Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, drawing on further specialist support as required.

NHS England will work with patient groups and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Medical Cannabis under Prescription to identify a sample of patients that have been seeking to access cannabis-based products for medicinal use through the National Health Service. Case reviews will involve interviews with relevant individuals who are involved in the decision to prescribe cannabis-based products for medicinal use, including patients, carers and relevant trust staff.

HC Deb 08 May 2019 | PQ 248611; PQ 248610

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Penning, Sir Mike

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his oral contribution of 8 April 2019, Official Report, column 26, who will be responsible for offering patients a second opinion on prescribing medical cannabis oil.

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his oral contribution of 8 April 2019, Official Report, column 26, how the system of second opinions on the prescribing of medical cannabis oil will be organised; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Seema Kennedy | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

In line with routine clinical practice, patients wishing to seek a second opinion on the National Health Service will be supported to do so. In the first instance, clinicians should refer patients for a second opinion using their established protocols. If it is not possible to obtain a second or further opinion using established protocols then trusts are instructed to contact their NHS England Regional Medical Director who will be able to

offer further advice around a referral route. The NHS England Regional Medical Directors will support trusts in identifying a suitable NHS specialist for a second opinion.

HC Deb 07 May 2019 | PQ 247999; PQ 247998

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Twigg, Stephen

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of NHS prescriptions for medical cannabis issued in each month since 1 November 2018.

Answering member: Seema Kennedy | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

NHS England is using extant systems to monitor use of the newly rescheduled unlicensed cannabis-based products for medicinal use in England. In England, these systems monitor the number of items dispensed and associated costs in primary care and the volume of products used and associated cost in secondary care. NHS England Controlled Drug Accountable Officers are also collecting local intelligence in both the National Health Service and independent sector.

Data on the number of items of cannabis-based medicines dispensed in NHS primary care in England from November 2018 to January 2019 has been published by the NHS Business Services Authority. Such data is published three months in arrears, and we expect information for February 2019 to be published shortly.

The published data shows that the following number of items of Nabilone and Sativex (two cannabis-based medicines) were dispensed from November 2018 to January 2019:

	November 2018	December 2018	January 2019
Nabilone	46	49	44
Sativex	175	181	167

Data from the NHS Business Services Authority for between November 2018 and January 2019 shows that no prescriptions were dispensed for unlicensed cannabis-based products for medicinal use in primary care in England during this time. We expect data for February 2019 to be available shortly.

Unlike NHS primary care where all dispensed prescriptions are processed centrally, this is not the case for secondary care. This information is collected by a third party and not routinely published.

94 patients have accessed Epidiolex through GW Pharma’s early access programmes ahead of a licensing decision by the European Medicines Agency.

Intelligence from NHS England Controlled Drugs Accountable Officers is that, up until the end to March 2019, one private prescription has been

issued for a cannabis-based product for medicinal use in secondary/tertiary care in England.

Import notifications to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency indicate a greater number of supplies. We are therefore cross-checking to ensure that information on the number of prescriptions for cannabis-based products for medicinal use aligns across the different data sources.

HC Deb 11 April 2019 | PQ 241990

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Grady, Patrick

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will issue a response to Early Day Motion 1832, on legalisation of medical cannabis.

Answering member: Seema Kennedy | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

The Government is clear that the decision to prescribe a cannabis-based product for medicinal use should only be made where it is clinically appropriate and in the best interest of the patient. This will be subject to local National Health Service governance and funding arrangements for prescribing unlicensed medicines, and patients will not be able to be prescribed such products by their general practitioner – and would require referral to a specialist clinician on the basis of clinical need.

The evidence base for cannabis-based products for medicinal use is still developing. However, the changes to the law are designed to encourage further research and the National Institute for Health Research has issued two calls for research proposals to rapidly advance knowledge in this area and remains open to research proposals outside of these calls in this priority area.

Interim clinical guidance, issued by the Royal College of Physicians, British Paediatric Neurology Association and Association of British Neurologists is based on the best available international evidence and reflects clinical guidance that has been published in other jurisdictions. This guidance will be updated and replaced in October 2019 by that commissioned from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

HC Deb 09 April 2019 | PQ 241057

[Epilepsy: Cannabis](#)

Asked by: Costa, Alberto

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of effectiveness of medical cannabis in the treatment of epilepsy.

Answering member: Caroline Dinéage | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

The evidence base for cannabis-based products for medicinal use is still developing. However, the changes to the law are designed to encourage further research and the National Institute for Health Research has issued a call for research proposals to rapidly advance knowledge in this area.

Interim clinical guidance, commissioned by NHS England and issued by the Royal College of Physicians, British Paediatric Neurology Association and Association of British Neurologists on certain severe epilepsies in children and adults, is based on the best available international clinical evidence and reflects clinical guidance that has been published in other jurisdictions.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has been commissioned to develop guidelines on the prescribing of cannabis-based medicinal products by October 2019. This guidance will cover severe treatment-resistant epilepsy, and will update and replace the interim guidance.

HC Deb 04 April 2019 | PQ 237784

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Penning, Sir Mike

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of NHS and medical professionals body guidelines on the prescription of medical cannabis.

Answering member: Steve Brine | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

The interim clinical guidance, commissioned by NHS England and issued by the Royal College of Physicians, British Paediatric Neurology Association and Association of British Neurologists is based on the best available clinical evidence for safety, efficacy and cost effectiveness and reflects clinical guidance that has been published in other jurisdictions.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, has been commissioned to develop guidelines for the National Health Service on the prescribing of cannabis-based medicinal products by October 2019. This will update and replace the interim guidance.

HC Deb 18 January 2019 | PQ 207192

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Penning, Sir Mike

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions (a) he, (b) Ministers in his Department and (c) officials in his Department with NHS Trusts on implementing adequate measures to ensure access to medical cannabis for patients.

Answering member: Steve Brine | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

Officials in the Department have worked with colleagues in NHS England, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the Home Office and individual National Health Service trusts, as necessary, to ensure that individual patients can access cannabis-based medicinal products where specialist doctors have decided this would be clinically beneficial.

HC Deb 18 January 2019 | PQ 207190

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Penning, Sir Mike

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) prescriptions issued and (b) patients that use medical cannabis in the next 12 months.

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS prescriptions have been honoured at a pharmacy for patients to use medical cannabis since 1 November 2018.

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS prescriptions have been issued for patients to use medical cannabis since 1 November 2018

Answering member: Steve Brine | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

NHS England has set up systems to monitor the prescribing of cannabis-based products for medicinal use via the NHS Business Services Authority and NHS England Controlled Drugs Accountable Officers. We expect the first data to be available by the end of March 2019.

The Department has made no estimate of future demand for medicinal cannabis over the next 12 months.

HC Deb 18 January 2019 | PQ 207189; PQ 207187; PQ 207185

[Cannabis-based Products: Medicinal Use](#)

Asked by: Ronnie Cowan

When the Government announced that they were prepared to allow medical cannabis under prescription, the decision was welcomed by many people throughout the United Kingdom who suffer from a range of conditions, but the process that has been adopted has failed to deliver. When will the Government take steps to facilitate GPs to prescribe and pharmacists to provide the appropriate effective forms of medical cannabis?

Answered by: Steve Brine | Department: Health and Social Care

We commissioned the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to produce further guidance that should be out by October. Doctors are right to be cautious when the evidence base remains limited and further research in this area is vital. The change to the law will facilitate that.

The National Institute for Health Research has called for research proposals to enhance our knowledge in the area and I think that that is absolutely right.

HC Deb 15 January 2019 | Vol 652 c998

[Pancreatic Cancer: Cannabis](#)

Asked by: Jones, Darren

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether medical cannabis oil will be made available for patients with pancreatic cancer that cannot be treated by other available therapies.

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the (a) safety and (b) effectiveness of the use medical cannabis oil in the palliative care of pancreatic cancer patients who have a history of strokes.

Answering member: Steve Brine | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

Earlier this year the Chief Medical Adviser to the United Kingdom Government, Professor Dame Sally Davies, conducted a review in which she examined evidence of the medicinal benefit of cannabis based products. She found conclusive evidence of the therapeutic benefit of cannabis based medicinal products for certain medical conditions and reasonable evidence of therapeutic benefit in several other medical conditions. That review did not specifically address the safety and efficacy of cannabis oil in the palliative care of pancreatic cancer patients who have a history of strokes.

As a result of the Chief Medical Adviser's advice, and that of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, the Home Office has laid legislation that means that, subject to Parliament, from 1 November certain cannabis-based products, that meet conditions related to the quality of their manufacture and supply routes, can be prescribed by doctors on the specialist register of the General Medical Council.

The regulations do not limit the types of conditions that can be considered for treatment and specialist doctors will no longer need to seek approval from an expert panel in order for patients to access the medicines. Prescription of unlicensed cannabis-based products for medicinal use will fall within existing legal requirements and National Health Service governance arrangements for 'special' medicines.

There are a number of pieces of work in train to support clinicians in making prescribing decisions. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence will produce clinical guidance by October 2019. In the meantime, NHS England has commissioned the British Paediatric Neurology Association and the Royal College of Physicians to provide interim clinical advice to specialist doctors ahead of the regulations coming into force.

HC Deb 15 October 2018 | PQ 177787; PQ 177786

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Brake, Tom

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons his Department charges the rate that it does for processing licence applications for medical cannabis.

Answering member: Mr Nick Hurd | Department: Home Office

Fees for all drug licences issued are charged on a full cost recovery basis, reflecting the total cost of processing that case from start to finish. Where a fee is payable, it is charged in accordance with the Misuse of Drugs (Fees) Regulations 2010 and payable by the 'applying' organisation (e.g. an NHS trust). Fee payments are not ordinarily met by individual patients.

The Government is committed to reviewing the fees paid for licenses that are awarded as a result of the advice of the Expert Panel. That review will take place urgently and will conclude before summer recess, with any legislation laid before the House at the first available date following its conclusion.

HC Deb 30 August 2018 | PQ 163489

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Antoniazzi, Tonia

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he is having with NHS England to ensure that consultants are aware of the licensing process for access to medical cannabis.

Answering member: Steve Brine | Department: Department of Health and Social Care

The Department is working with NHS England and equivalents in the devolved administrations to ensure that cannabis-based medicinal products are sourced and supplied where a licence is granted. In the longer-term, prescribing guidance will be developed following any decision to reschedule these products.

Guidance on the licensing process for access to cannabis and cannabis-based medicinal products is available on the Home Office Gov.uk website.

HC Deb 23 July 2018 | PQ 165715

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Antoniazzi, Tonia

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions he is having with NHS England to ensure that consultants are aware of the licensing process for access to medical cannabis.

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance his Department has given to the respective health departments in the devolved nations on access to medical cannabis under licence.

Answering member: Mr Nick Hurd | Department: Home Office

Advice about clinical applications for medicinal cannabis is available on the gov.uk website, which was publicised at the time of the Expert Panel's launch. This makes clear that applications must be made by senior clinicians who are on the General Medical Council's relevant specialist register with an active license to practise.

The Department for Health and Social Care is working with NHS England and equivalents in the devolved nations to ensure that cannabis based medicinal products are sourced and supplied where a licence is granted. In the longer term, prescribing guidance will be developed following any decision to reschedule these products.

HC Deb 20 July 2018 | PQ 164520; PQ 164519

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Brake, Tom

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether children suffering from epilepsy and associated illnesses will be able to apply for emergency use of medical cannabis after receiving the consent of a doctor.

Answering member: Mr Nick Hurd | Department: Home Office

We recognise that people suffering from chronic pain and debilitating illnesses will look to alleviate their symptoms. Recent cases have shown that we need to look more closely at the use of cannabis based medicine in healthcare in the UK. That is why the Home Secretary announced on 19 June that there would be a two-part review into the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes.

In lieu of the outcomes of this review, a time limited expert panel of clinicians has been set up and will establish a process to assess applications for special licences to prescribe cannabis based medicinal products and, where appropriate, recommend applications to the Home Secretary and the Department of Health in Northern Ireland.

Clinicians will be at the heart the process. Any proposal on a course of treatment will be clinically led with evidence based recommendations provided by clinicians. As such the Expert Panel will only consider applications from GMC registered practitioners who are listed on the GMC's Specialist Register. The panel will not accept applications directly from members of the public or from general practitioners.

The expert panel will assess applications for special licences to prescribe cannabis based medicinal products and provide recommendations to the Home Secretary and the Health Secretary for Northern Ireland within 2 to 4 weeks of the submission of a correct and complete application. The Minister will then decide whether a licence should be granted.

Provision for cases to be processed more quickly is possible, by convening of a virtual panel comprising a minimum of four members.

HC Deb 10 July 2018 | PQ 159487

[Cannabis: Medical Treatments](#)

Asked by: Smith, Jeff

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his Department's press release of 19 June 2018, Home Office launches review into medical use of cannabis, what the timetable is for the conclusion of (a) part 1 and (b) part 2 of the review into medical cannabis.

Answering member: Mr Nick Hurd | Department: Home Office

As the Home Secretary announced on 19 June, the Government is undertaking a two-phase review looking at the scheduling of cannabis. Part one was led by Professor Dame Sally Davies, the Chief Medical Advisor to the Government, and considered evidence for the medicinal and therapeutic benefits of cannabis and cannabis based medicinal products. This part of the review is now complete and the report was published on 3 July.

Also on 3 July, the Home Secretary commissioned the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to undertake part two of the review which will consider the appropriate schedule for cannabis related products, based on the balance of harms and public health requirements. The government has asked for short-term advice within three weeks of the commission with a full review expected by July 2019.

HC Deb 06 July 2018 | PQ 160289

4. Useful links and further reading

NHS *Medical cannabis (and cannabis oils)*

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/medical-cannabis/>

NHS England *Cannabis-based products for medicinal use: Frequently Asked Questions* A set of clinical frequently asked questions (FAQs) to provide further support to prescribers.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines/support-for-prescribers/cannabis-based-products-for-medicinal-use/cannabis-based-products-for-medicinal-use-frequently-asked-questions/>

Advice on scheduling of cannabis-derived medicinal products

Advice from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to the Home Office about the scheduling of cannabis-derived medicinal products 19 July 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727333/ACMD_advice_on_scheduling_of_cannabis_derived_medicinal_products.pdf

Government response 26 July 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729819/Government_response_to_the_ACMD_-_cannabis_derived_medicinal_products.pdf

Further advice from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to the Home Office about the scheduling of cannabis-derived medicinal products 11 September 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739636/Consultation_on_Cannabis-derived_medicinal_products.pdf

Government response 21 September 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742580/Final_cleared_ACMD_response_21-09-18_RC.PDF

Cannabis-based products for medicinal use

A letter to clinicians from the Chief Medical Officer and NHS England following the rescheduling of legislation to allow the medicinal use of cannabis-based products 2 November 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/753444/letter-with-guidance-on-cannabis-based-products-for-medicinal-use.pdf

House of Commons Health and Social Care Select Committee Inquiry
Drugs policy: medicinal cannabis

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-and-social-care-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/drugs-policy-medicinal-cannabis-inquiry-17-19/>

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance in development Cannabis

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/indevelopment/gid-ng10124/documents>

Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs *Response to consultation on cannabis-based medicinal products* 10 December 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/response-to-consultation-on-cannabis-based-medicinal-products>

Epilepsy Action *Medical cannabis for epilepsy in the UK*

<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/info/treatment/cannabis-based-treatments>

Multiple Sclerosis Society UK *Cannabis*

<https://www.mssociety.org.uk/about-ms/treatments-and-therapies/cannabis>

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