

Cannabis use and the Public Health approach to reducing harms

City of Hamilton Board of Health September 17, 2018

Background: Legalization

Prohibition has not

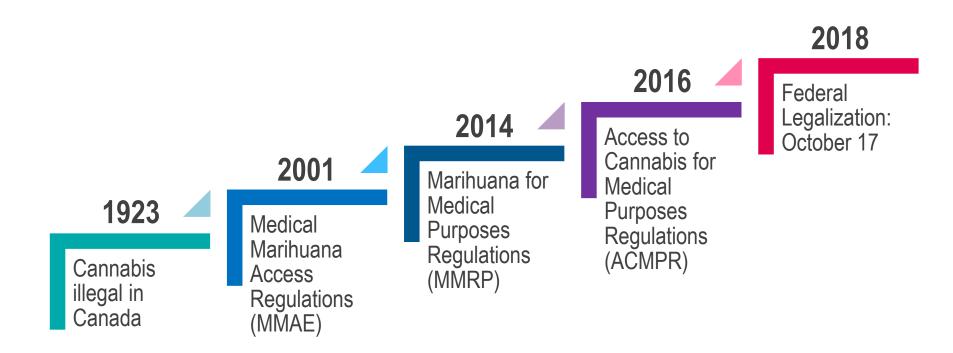
- Prevented use
- Limited youth access
- Deterred crime

Legalization can

- Limit youth access
- Deter crime
- Protect public health and safety with product quality and safety requirements



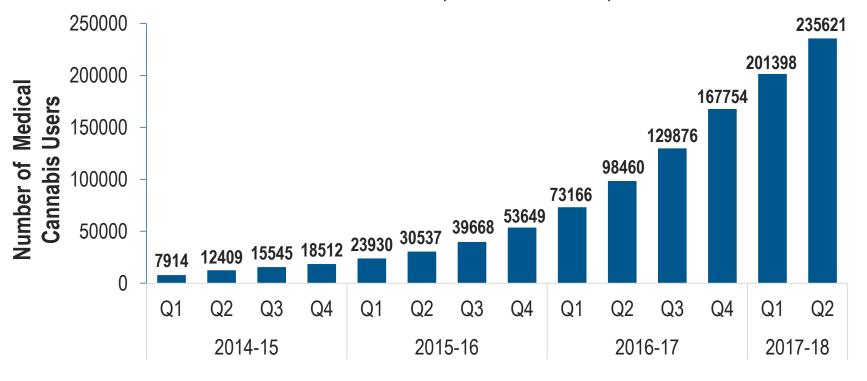
Background: Legal Status in Canada





Background: Medical use in Canada

Figure 1: Number of Medical Cannabis Users in Canada by Fiscal Quarter and Year, Health Canada, 2014-2017



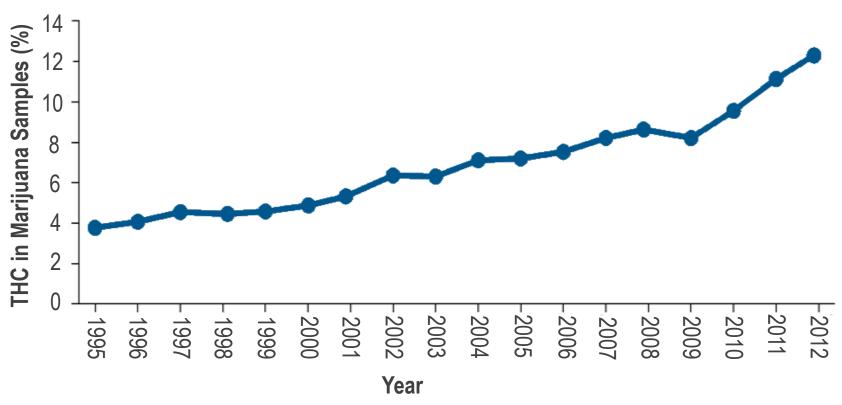
Quarter by Year

Source: Health Canada. Licensed Producers Market Data. Available from: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/licensed-producers/market-data.html



Background: Risks

Figure 2: Average THC concentration of Drug Enforcement Administration specimens by year, United States, 1995-2012



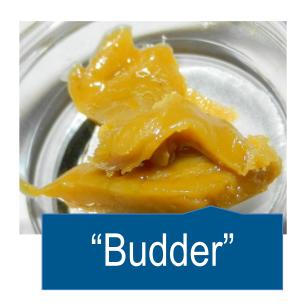
Source: El-Sohly, MA, et. al. (2016). Changes in Cannabis Potency over the Last Two Decades (1995-2014) – Analysis of Current Data in the United States. Available from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4987131/



Background: New Formulations







"Concentrates": Butane Hash Oil Extractions (up to 90% THC)



Background: Harms

Potential cannabis harms

Acute

- Increased motor vehicle accident risk
- Cannabinoid-induced delirium/psychosis
- Adverse effects on cognition

Chronic

- Cannabis use disorder
- Cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome
- Chronic bronchitis
- Increased risk of psychotic disorders
- Reduced educational attainment



Background: At-Risk Populations



Youth



Frequent users



Pregnant women/women who are breastfeeding

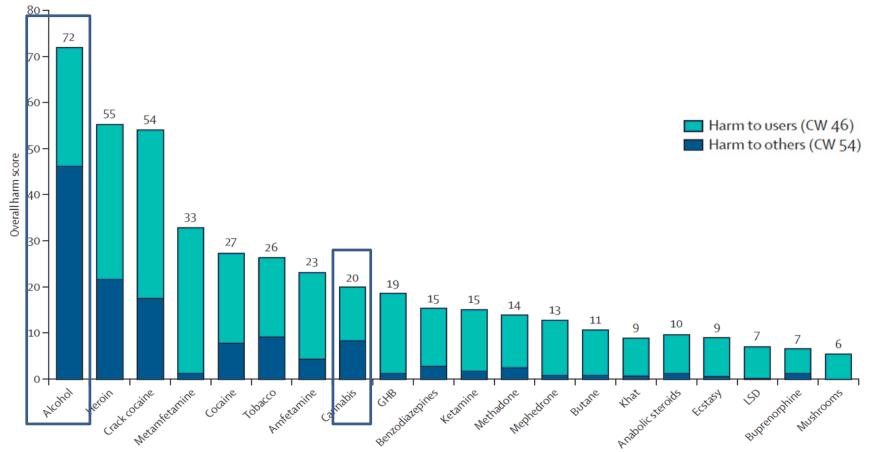


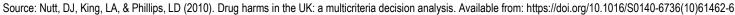
Individuals with mental health/substance use vulnerabilities



Background: Contextualizing Risks & Harm

Figure 3: Drugs ordered by their overall harm scores, showing the separate contributions to the overall scores of harms to users and harm to others







Past-year Substance Use Among Secondary Students (2017)

Cannabis

- 30.1%
- 24.0% (Cannabis & Alcohol)

Note: Combined estimates for Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant & Waterloo Wellington LHINs.

Source: CAMH, 2017 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS),

http://www.camh.ca/en/research/news and publications/ontario-student-drug-use-and-health-survey/Documents/2017%20OSDUHS%20Documents/Detailed DrugUseReport 2017OSDUHS.pdf

Past-year Substance Use Among Adults (2015/16)

Cannabis

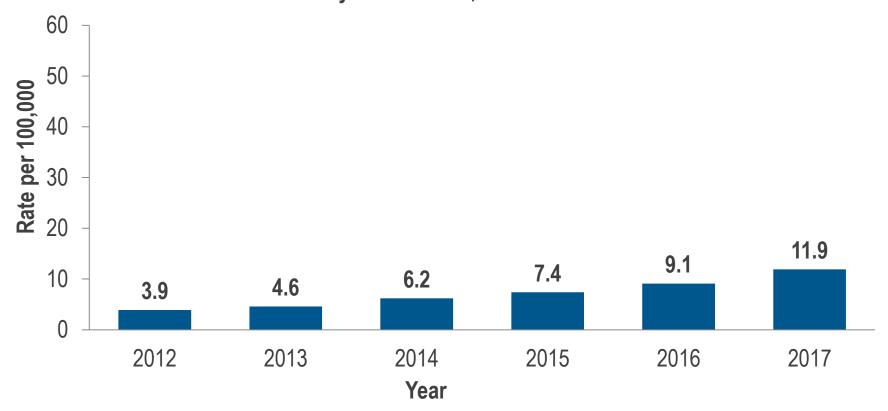
~13% reported past-year use

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2015/16, Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care



Hamilton: Emergency Department & Cannabis Use

Figure 4: Rate of ED visits (per 100,000) for acute cannabis poisoning, City of Hamilton*, 2012-2017

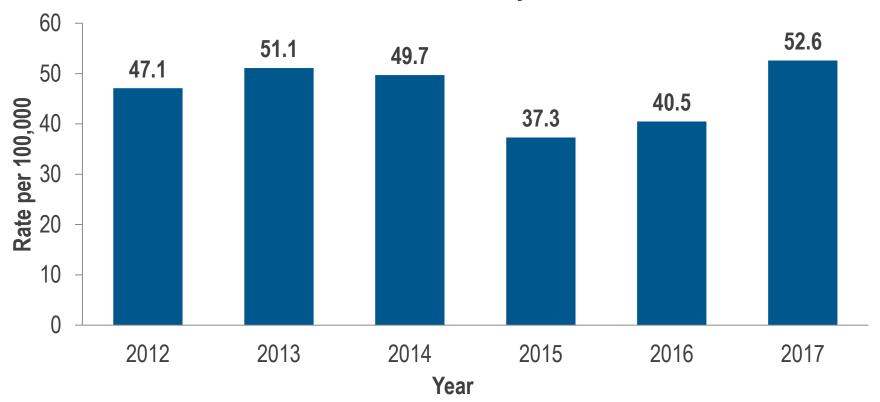


^{*} Individuals who reside in Hamilton even if seen in an ED outside of Hamilton
Source: Emergency Department Visits, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, June 2018



Hamilton: Emergency Department & Cannabis Use

Figure 5: Rate of ED visits (per 100,000) for mental & behavioural disorders due to the use of cannabis, City of Hamilton*, 2012-2017



^{*} Individuals who reside in Hamilton even if seen in an ED outside of Hamilton

Source: Emergency Department Visits, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, June 2018



Cannabis in Context of Other Substances

Opioids Alcohol Cocaine Meth Cannabis 0 deaths ~100 deaths / 87 deaths 30 deaths (2016) **15** deaths (2016) **Deaths** (2017)reported year ~900 hosp, 297 poisoning + 43 poisoning + 84 poisoning + 51 poisoning + **Morbidity** >3000 ED visits / 221 disorder ED 372 disorder ED 233 disorder ED 289 disorder ED visits in 2016 visits in 2016 visits in 2016 visits in 2016 yr Prevalence. 43% exceeded 15% had opioid **11.6%** (past n/a n/a **Adults LRADG** prescription year) **59.8%** (past 0.8% (Ontario **30.1%** (past Prevalence, **13%** (past year) 3.1% (Ontario) students) year) year) Youth



Health impacts of cannabis legalization



Changes in prevalence and location of use

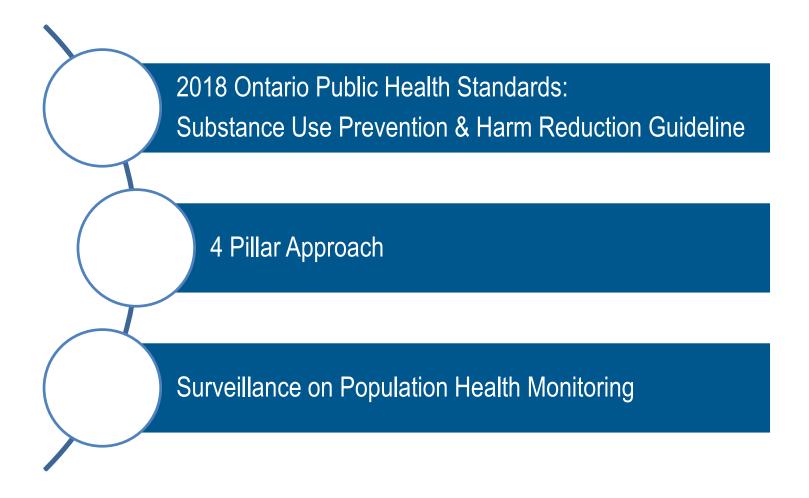


Unknown implications for different demographics and geographic locations



Public Health to monitor the effects of this change locally

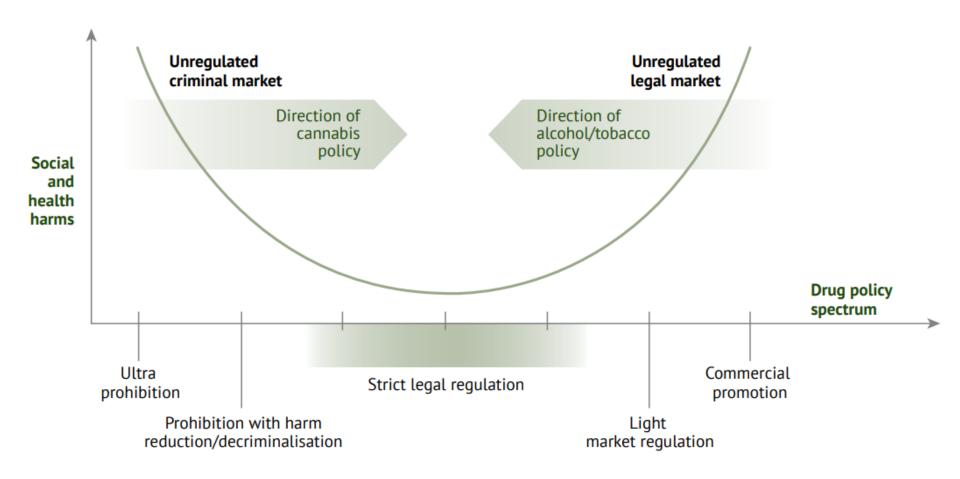
Background: What drives the Public Health Approach?





Healthy & Safe Communities Department

Prohibition Paradox



Source: Government of Canada. A Framework for the Legalization and Regulation of Cannabis in Canada. Available from: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/laws-regulations/task-force-cannabis-legalization-regulation-regulation-regulation-cannabis-in-canada.html



Public Health Approach to Psychoactive Substance Use

HARM ENFORCE-PREVENTION TREATMENT REDUCTION MENT Preventing Supporting Addressing Supporting problematic illicit drug innovative measures drug and production, approaches that reduce substance supply and to treatment the negative distribution and consequences use rehabilitation of drug and substance use SUPPORTED BY A STRONG EVIDENCE BASE To better identify trends, target interventions, monitor impacts and support evidence-based decisions

Source: Health Canada. Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy. Available from: https://www.canada.ca/en/healthcanada/services/publications/healthy-living/pillars-canadian-drugs-substances-strategy.html



Overview of Hamilton Public Health Strategy: Strategy Goals



To **educate** the public on safe, legal and responsible use of of cannabis



To **prevent** or delay the onset of cannabis use and to reduce the likelihood of harm from use, problematic use and/or overdose



To **promote** a culture of safer use



To **increase knowledge** of the impacts of consuming cannabis while parenting or pregnant



To **equip trusted adults** with the knowledge and resources to 'start the conversation' about cannabis with youth



Prevention: Targeted Populations



Youth



Frequent users



Pregnant women/women who are breastfeeding



Individuals with mental health/substance use vulnerabilities



Healthy & Safe Communities Department

Prevention: Education Campaigns

First campaign to focus on youth & young adults. Key objectives:

- Be first, be right, be credible.
- Use simple, plain, appropriate language.
- > Target audiences for information and education.
- Get the terminology right.
- Understand the limits of evidence and use wisely.
- Don't stigmatize or normalize.
- Ensure that all individuals understand legal responsibilities and new criminal offenses.

Source: Eykelbosh A, Nicol AM. (2017). How we talk about "pot" matters: Risk messaging around cannabis legalization. CIPHI Annual Education Conference. National Collaborating Centre For Environmental Health.



Prevention: Federal Initiatives

Health Canada & public health education campaigns

HEALTH

TRAVEL

WORKPLACE

IMPAIRMENT









- Funded organizations to relay prevention and safer use messaging
- Social Media campaigns (i.e. Healthy Canadians)



Prevention – Provincial Initiatives

Youth and young adult awareness campaigns

Ontario-specific rules related to cannabis and road safety

The Ontario Ministry of Education:

- Resources for students, parents and educators
- More resources within the school system for mental health and addiction needs





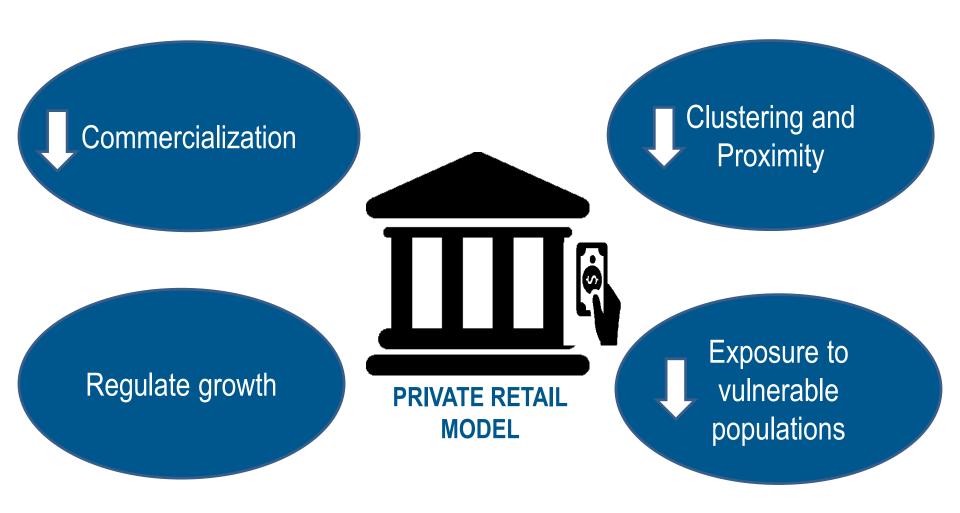
Harm Reduction

Internal education Safer cannabis use messaging Delayed use Safe cannabis storage By-laws & policies on retail distribution



Healthy & Safe Communities Department

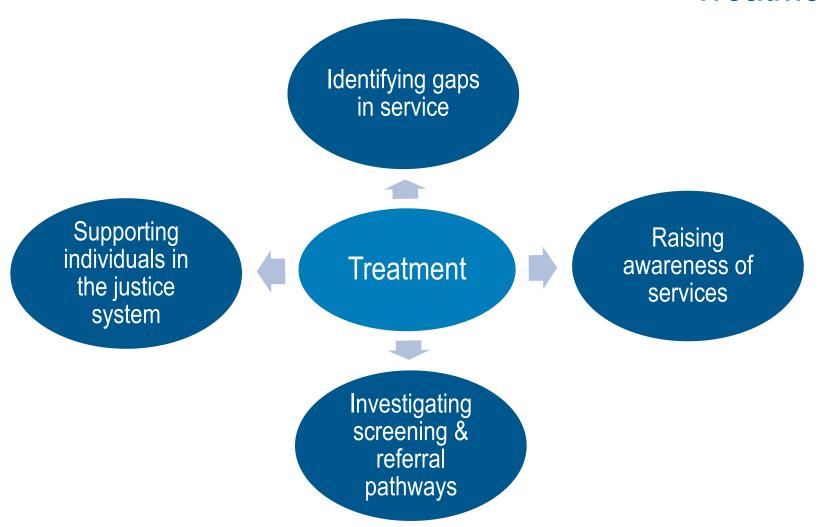
Harm Reduction: Retail Distribution & Public Health Goals





Healthy & Safe Communities Department

Treatment





Enforcement: Drug Strategy



Collaboration to develop a comprehensive approach to cannabis enforcement



Funding & expansion of diversion programs



Substance use enhanced enforcement training



Diversion screening tool



Healthy & Safe Communities Department

Overview of Hamilton Public Health Strategy

Prevention

Activities

- Education campaigns
- Raising awareness of youth, parent and family programs & resources

Harm Reduction

Activities

- Internal engagement
- Promotion of Canada's LRCUG
- Tailored messaging for youth
- Messaging around cannabis storage
- Discussion with Licensing & By-Law services

Treatment

Activities

- · Environmental scan
- Identifying gaps in service
- Raising awareness of services
- Investigating screening and referral pathways
- Supporting individuals in justice system

Enforcement

Activities

- Collaboration to develop a comprehensive approach to cannabis enforcement
- Drug Strategy: funding & expansion of diversion; enforcement training; diversion screening tool

Hamilton Cannabis Strategy goals:

- · To educate safe, legal and responsible use of cannabis
- To prevent or delay the onset of cannabis use and to reduce the likelihood of harm from use, problematic use and/or overdose
- · To promote a culture of safer use
- · To increase knowledge of the impacts of consuming cannabis while parenting or pregnant
- To equip trusted adults with the knowledge and resources to 'start the conversation' about cannabis use with youth



Safer Use

