

## **Cannabis Based Products for Medicinal Use (CBPM) in NHS Grampian Information for Patients/Public – Version 2**

Following the 2018 Home Office review regarding the use of cannabis and cannabis-based products for medicinal use (CBPM), the UK government has rescheduled certain CBPMs through a change in regulations that came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018. The Scottish Government has published [guidance](#) for doctors working in the NHS and in private practice in Scotland regarding CBPM. This document answers some of the frequently asked questions regarding the prescribing of cannabis and cannabis related products.

### **What are Cannabis Based Products for Medicinal Use (CBPM)?**

There are three broad requirements that a product should satisfy to be classified as a CBPM;

- The product is or contains cannabis, cannabis resin, cannabidiol or a cannabidiol derivative
- It is produced for medicinal use in humans; and
- It is a product that is regulated as a medicinal product, or an ingredient of a medicinal product.

CBPMs do not include raw/unrefined cannabis or cannabis/hemp oil products that can be purchased online/in health food shops. These products are not produced for medicinal use and cannot be recommended or prescribed.

### **What was the change in the law?**

In 2018 the UK government has changed the regulations to allow CBPM to be prescribed – this is limited to specific conditions with only specialist consultants legally being able to prescribe these products.

### **What conditions can CBPM be prescribed for?**

CBPM is only considered for conditions where there is evidence of benefit or accepted UK guidelines for use. **Currently this includes two indications:**

- **complex intractable epilepsy**
- **nausea and vomiting due to chemotherapy treatment.**

### **Can CBPM be prescribed for other conditions, e.g. pain?**

No. At the moment there is not enough evidence to allow prescribing of CBPM for other conditions such as pain – this includes chronic pain and palliative care.

### **I have been buying hemp oil from a health food shop/online – can my GP prescribed this for me?**

No. The only cannabis products that can be legally prescribed are those that are specifically made as medicinal products.

Products not meeting the definition of CBPM cannot legally be prescribed – this includes unrefined plant materials or cannabis oils, e.g. products which can be obtained online/in health food shops. These products do not meet the standards for good manufacturing practice and good distribution practice and are not for medicinal use. These products are not recommended for use as they may interact with other medicines you are taking and possibly cause side effects. The strength and contents of these products/oils cannot be guaranteed and they may also contain impurities.

**I have hemp oil from a health food shop/online – can I have this prescribed while I am in hospital?**

These products cannot be prescribed on a medicines 'Kardex'/Prescription and Administration Record (PAR) as they are not medicinal products. Nurses are not able to administer these products to you while you are in hospital. It is important that you inform your doctor if you are taking products like these as they may interact with your other medicines or cause side effects.

**I have been smoking cannabis – am I eligible to get this or another CBPM prescribed?**

No. It remains a criminal offence to smoke cannabis. This has not changed.

**Who can prescribe CBPM for the allowed conditions?**

CBPM can only be prescribed by consultants (doctors in hospital on the specialist register) who can only prescribe within their area of speciality following the local approval processes. GPs are not allowed to prescribe CBPM.

**Can I ask my GP to refer me to a consultant to be prescribed CBPM?**

Your GP would only be able to consider referring you to a consultant if you were suffering from one of the conditions that can be treated with CBPM. GPs cannot refer patients to hospital consultants for other conditions/requests for CBPM.

**Can I get CBPM prescribed privately?**

Private Doctors must be on the specialist register to be able to legally prescribe CBPMs, and can only prescribe in their area of speciality. Private Doctors would be expected to follow the same regulations and guidance regarding the prescribing of CBPM as consultants working for the NHS. If you get a private supply for CBPM you would need to pay for this and for any ongoing supplies. You cannot be prescribed CBPM on the NHS unless you were referred to a consultant who felt this was appropriate and followed the regulations.

**Does this change affect Sativex®?**

No. Sativex® is a medicine licensed to be used in multiple sclerosis. Sativex® is **not** recommended by the [Scottish Medicines Consortium](#) (SMC) for prescribing on the NHS in Scotland.

**Can I get Sativex® prescribed privately?**

Sativex® can be prescribed privately by a private doctor. However, you would have to pay for this and any ongoing supplies, which can be very costly. Sativex® is not recommended by the SMC for prescribing on the NHS so will not be supplied on a GP prescription, even if you have been receiving this privately.

**Will the laws on cannabis be relaxed?**

The government has no intention of legalising the use of cannabis for recreational (non-medicinal) use. Possessing cannabis is illegal, whatever it is being used for. That included medicinal use unless it is a CBMP that has been prescribed for you.