

Ask a Practice Advisor: Medical Cannabis

Updated November 2020

Can Registered Nurses in Saskatchewan assist with and/or administer medical cannabis?

Yes, the SRNA has determined that Registered Nurses (RNs) in Saskatchewan may assist with providing, and/or administering, medical cannabis (including cannabis products and derivatives such as dried or fresh leaves, oils and concentrates) to a patient, client or resident receiving publicly funded health care services and who is currently under medical treatment. The patient, client or resident must possess a medical document issued by an authorized health care practitioner. The medical document contains similar information to a prescription, including:

- the authorized health care practitioner's licence information
- the patient's name and date of birth
- a period of use of up to one (1) year
- a daily quantity of medical cannabis.

An employer/agency policy will define what employees may act as agents of an authorized health care practitioner with respect to the handling of medical cannabis as well as the process(es) for complying with the applicable regulations in the care setting. The policy will include the limits on the amount of medical cannabis that RNs can possess during the medication administration process.

RNs are required to understand and comply with the applicable legislation and employer/agency policy when assisting and/or administering medical cannabis to a patient, client or resident.

As with the administration of all medications, RNs need to utilize the principles outlined in the SRNA document entitled, [Medication Management: A Patient Centred Decision-making Framework \(2015\)](#) to provide safe client care.

What legislation is related to medical cannabis?

- Health Canada has released the [Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations \(ACMPR\)](#). This federal legislation replaced the Marihuana for Medical Purposes Regulations (MMPR).
- Medical Cannabis is a controlled substance under the federal [Controlled Drugs and Substance Act](#) and the [Narcotic Control Regulations](#).
- Health Canada has provided information on cannabis for medical purposes and the [interpretation of the Medical Cannabis Regulations](#).

What factors should RNs consider prior to administering, or assisting a client to self-administer, medical cannabis?

- Do you have knowledge about the medication and the competence to safely administer medical cannabis or to assist a client with self-administration?
- Do you need to consult with any other members of the health care team prior to administration?
- Is there a valid order from an authorized health care practitioner?
- Is the medical cannabis appropriately labelled?
- Have you included the medical cannabis in the client's medication reconciliation profile?
- What should be documented related to assistance and/or administration of medical cannabis?

Where can RNs access additional information about Medical Cannabis?

Health Canada has prepared [information for health care professionals](#).

For more information ACMPR please contact Health Canada at 1-866-337-7705

SRNA practice advisors are also available to discuss practice issues and concerns regarding medical cannabis. To contact the SRNA for practice advice please call 1-800-667-9945 or 306-359-4200 (ask to speak to a practice advisor), or send an email to: practiceadvice@srna.org