

**POSITION STATEMENT OF THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY
ON
MEDICAL CANNABIS LEGALIZATION IN THE PHILIPPINES**

We, in the medical community are steadfast in our stand to FIRST DO NO HARM. We have the ethical responsibility as physicians to prescribe drugs based on proven efficacy and safety in order to safeguard the best interest of our patients.

The recent clinical trials on the efficacy of cannabidiol for treating seizures in Dravet Syndrome and Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome have shown positive results, leading to the approval of pharmaceutical grade cannabidiol (Epidiolex) by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for this indication.

Pharmaceutical grade cannabidiol can be accessed for compassionate use through the Philippine FDA. This will address the concerns of patients and their families with these rare and severe intractable forms of epilepsy.

Any other form of cannabis for the treatment of other epilepsy types or syndromes, or other medical conditions, should meet all the Philippine FDA requirements for approval, including a thorough quality control process to ensure the safety of our patients.

We reiterate our position that THERE IS NO NEED FOR ANY NEW LEGISLATION TO ALLOW ACCESS TO MEDICAL CANNABIS AND EXPAND RESEARCH ON ITS MEDICINAL VALUE. Medical cannabis for compassionate use can be accessed through our FDA and Cannabis Research is already provided by law through Republic Act 9165.

Cannabis research shall be under the regulation of the Dangerous Drug Board as prescribed by law. Cannabis cultivation and any efforts to allow cultivation of Cannabis outside the regulation and implementing guidelines of the Dangerous Drug Board (DDB) is unacceptable, since this will lead to diversion of Cannabis for recreational use.

Any legislative move to legalize any form of Cannabis for specific medical indications without rigorous scientific basis, will expose our citizens to a natural, uncontrolled, human experiment with Cannabis and its derivatives. This human experiment under the guise of law requires no informed consent, no approval from a professional Institutional Review Board, no protection from our drug regulatory agency, no accountability, and no recourse for unfavorable consequences from its use.

Any policy on Medical Cannabis in our local setting should be based on a thorough study of its therapeutic benefits based on the best available evidence and cost-effectiveness, with careful consideration of our regulatory capacity, socioeconomic conditions, social values and the public health and safety impact on our people.

This Position Statement is a consensus of a coalition of 16 medical organizations led by the Philippine Medical Association strongly opposing the legalization of Medical Cannabis in the Philippines.

Position Statement History

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