



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD) in individuals using cannabis for medical purposes.**

The most common conditions for which individuals obtain medical cannabis are pain, insomnia, anxiety, and depressed mood, but evidence for the efficacy of cannabis to treat these symptoms has been mixed.

A follow-up study of a 12-week randomised clinical trial of medical cannabis users, found an association between frequent cannabis use and increased Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD) risk, with no significant improvement in pain, anxiety, insomnia, or depression symptom severity. These findings call into question the use of cannabis as an effective tool in relieving clinical symptoms.

The study was conducted by a team of researchers from Harvard University, one of the world's most respected medical research institutes. Harvard Medical School consistently ranks as the number one medical school around the globe.

Cannabis use disorder (CUD), also known as cannabis addiction, is defined in the fifth revision of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) and ICD-10 as the continued use of cannabis despite clinically significant impairment. Those who used cannabis 3 or more days per week were 269% more likely to develop CUD.

The study found an association between greater cannabis use and greater pain, indicating that cannabis is not adequately treating pain symptoms. This viewpoint is supported by a recent position paper from the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) that found, after a comprehensive review of research on the use of cannabinoids to treat pain, there was a lack of sufficient evidence to endorse the general use of cannabinoids for the treatment of pain.

The lack of improvement in symptoms of anxiety after 12 months of cannabis use adds to a growing body of literature that does not endorse cannabis as a treatment for these conditions. The lack of benefit from cannabis indicates that individuals with chronic conditions should consider evidence-based treatments.