

University of Lethbridge Cannabis Consultations Sessions

Summary

During the month of January 2018, five Cannabis Consultation sessions (three on the Lethbridge campus and two on the Calgary campus) were offered to the University Community. The sessions were open to any Faculty, Staff and Students, over 70 people participated.

Main Themes

Personal, Recreational, Cannabis Use:

- The Cannabis Policy and Procedure should be clearly written (free of jargon) and supported by related agreements such as housing, academic calendar, human resources and collective agreements. Clear language related to recreational use- not permitted during timeframe of a community member carrying out university business – work hours, class hours, university commitments, etc.
- A few community members stated they would appreciate a smoke free campus-including tobacco. Several community members reported they would appreciate it if the smoking areas (tobacco and cannabis) were limited to only a few designated locations on campus that are away from entrances/exits of buildings.
- Discussion of factors to consider related to cannabis use on campus:
 - A) Campus area spans over 500 acres. Over 550 students live on campus. Smoking or vaping cannabis will not be permitted indoors. It is reported that currently people use cannabis in the coulees- creating a significant fire and safety risk.
 - B) Prohibiting cannabis use on campus would require additional resources at many levels of the campus community- campus security, housing, non-academic student conduct procedures involve the Registrar's Office and Faculty Deans. Campus Security are not Peace Officers- they cannot ticket cannabis users.
 - C) Several risks to consider in the event cannabis use is not prohibited on campus- safety of students that live on campus walking off campus (especially late at night) to smoke/vape cannabis. Risk of student's driving off campus to consume cannabis- this will increase the incidents of students driving impaired and consuming cannabis in cars. Students will continue to consume in the coulees- increased risk of fire and personal safety in isolated areas. Is prohibiting cannabis use on our campus a realistic expectation that would be adhered to by the community given it will be legal in our society? Careful consideration to the Charter of Human Rights related to medicinal cannabis users specifically students that live on campus. How do you identify the medicinal users from the recreational users in a manner that respects people's privacy?
- Distribution of Cannabis implementation on campus (Policy, Procedure and Health Promotion/Awareness) should be multifaceted and continue throughout the year.

How do we ensure that we respect the health and safety of users and non-users?

- Occupational Health and Safety and the responsibilities of supervisors/faculty to identify and address impairment. Discussion related to "fit to work" and "fit to learn". Many discussions

related to Occupational Health and Safety Legislation – will the legislation be updated to address cannabis impairment concerns? Present practices already address personal substance use- is cannabis any different?

- Provide access to the Cannabis related materials on the University of Lethbridge Website and University of Lethbridge App for Students to access prior to arriving on campus and throughout the year. Promote student's ability to make informed decisions related to cannabis health effects and use. Incorporate this information into Recruitment, Enrollment, Registration and Housing Departments to engage with prospective or new students and families before they arrive on campus.
- Incorporate Cannabis Awareness and Resources into New Student Orientation, GSA and ULSU Fresh Fest Events, Digital Display Boards, Notice Boards.
- Provide Faculty and Staff with Cannabis Awareness and Resources to support the community. Collaborate with Human Resources to ensure all staff receive this information before the fall 2018 academic term begins.
- It is important that staff and students are offered support for cases of substance dependence. Personal/recreational use during work/course hours is not the same as a dependence where treatment is recommended by a professional.
- Suggested Designated Cannabis Use Areas on campus required strategic placement – they need to be accessible in a safe environment, out of direct wind, away from doors/buildings used by children, away from air intake and windows that open. * Location close to The Zoo- safety of people going outside as no indoor use will be permitted according to legislation.
- Cannabis use paraphernalia- should we limit or try to restrict some types? (Comparable to paraphernalia that encourages high consumption of alcohol –Kegs etc.)
- Significant discussions about reducing tobacco use locations at doorways during this process- create an environment that not every door is a tobacco or a cannabis use area. Give non-smokers the option to use entrances that are second hand smoke free. (Consideration for people with allergies, attempting or have discontinued prior use).
- Significant discussion about separating tobacco and cannabis use locations.
- Housing – incorporate cannabis personal use questions into application to assist with matching roommates. (Similar to current questions about tobacco use)
- Events that include students under the age of 18 years – what checks and balances can ensure cannabis is not accessible to minors? Is the wrist ban system adequate? Outdoor events- special consideration. What are the consequences when minors are using at events? (Should be managed the same as alcohol.) Health Promotion approach for first time offenders as opposed to punitive responses.
- Scent concerns- storage and odor after use.
- Preparation of edibles- scent concerns.
- Consumption of Edibles- education about effects of intoxication.
- Growing for personal use will not be permitted in campus housing.

B. Medicinal cannabis use:

- **Medicinal cannabis use has been legalized for many years. Have there been any gaps in the way the University has been accommodating its use?**

- Currently the University does not have a policy or procedure for accommodating medicinal cannabis use and for the few cases in housing a case by case approach has been used.

Consider the balance of protecting people's right to privacy- if campus has designated areas for personal use, medicinal users could access these areas anonymous - increasing privacy. (Staff would not need to ask if they have an accommodation for medicinal use)

Do you have any additional thoughts related to the use of medicinal cannabis at the U of L?

Educate staff regarding circumstances when a person that is prescribed medicinal marijuana is requesting accommodations and the process of ensuring this is set up with the designated departments (Human Resources – staff, Accommodated Learning –Students, Housing) vs when a person maybe prescribed and is not requesting accommodations- respecting people's right to privacy.