



Four State Medical Society Presidents: No, No, No, No to Recreational Marijuana

Wilmington, DE – March 21, 2019 - We, the undersigned, as presidents of our state medical societies, have joined together to express our mutual opposition regarding our states' approval of any policies that legalize recreational marijuana.

We have serious concerns about the lack of scientific evidence that supports recreational marijuana use by adults and young adults.

Most importantly, not enough research has been done to prove marijuana is safe. We must look at the potential effect legalization will have on overall use and significant harms, including impaired driving and accidents, creation and worsening of severe mental health issues, and negative impacts on developing minds. We also must look at the data from other states where there has been an increase in teen usage and an increase in car accidents. The huge increase in teen vaping causes great concern and it is very possible that we will have a similar situation with legalized marijuana. We need to learn the lessons from history to ensure that any legalized marijuana product does not become the Big Tobacco of the 21st Century.

States that are rushing towards legalization of recreational marijuana are ignoring how profit-driven corporations hooked generations of Americans on cigarettes and opioids, killing millions and straining public resources.

We are in full agreement that calls for a rescheduling of marijuana from a Schedule I drug to a Schedule II classification. As a Schedule II drug, government funding can be sought for necessary research that clearly defines the positive and negative elements of marijuana use. When we have the science, we can make a qualified and quantified decisions about legalization.

To date, ten states have legalized recreational marijuana. Let's stop the tide now.

While we are cognizant of the legal inequity that is all too often attached to marijuana use, we agree with the AMA that public-health-based strategies are a better solution than either the old commitment to incarceration or this new attempt to dodge the problem through legalization. We must keep patients first and ahead of profits and taxable revenue.

As physician leaders, we agree, as one voice, that the legalization of recreational marijuana does not serve the best interests of our patients nor will it serve the best interest of our states.

Andrew W. Dahlke, MD
President, Medical Society of Delaware

Claudia B. Gruss, MD
President, Connecticut State Medical Society

Thomas J. Madejski, MD
President, Medical Society of the State of New York

John W. Poole, MD
President, Medical Society of New Jersey