



Oregon Society of Addiction Medicine

A Chapter of American Society of Addiction Medicine

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February 14, 2024

Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Lewis and Tran, and Members of the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans:

On behalf of the Oregon Society of Addiction Medicine (ORSAM), the medical specialty society representing Physicians and other clinicians in Oregon specializing in the prevention and treatment of addiction, thank you for the opportunity to tell you that **we support House Bill 4093: Relating to public health requirements of the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission; declaring an emergency.**

Many people consume alcohol occasionally, responsibly, and at levels that do not cause them significant harm. However, Oregon needs to reduce harmful drinking and the development of Alcohol Use Disorder as evidenced by how we compare with other states:

- Binge drinking among young adults, ages 18-25 years - 38.9% in 2017-2019, which exceeded the regional average of 35%ⁱⁱ
- Alcohol use disorder among young adults in Oregon - 12.6% in 2017-2019, which exceeded the national average of 9.8%ⁱⁱⁱ
- 5th among states for Alcohol Use Disorder prevalence in teens and adults - 12.3%^{iv}

Excessive alcohol use has serious consequences for public health. "Excessive alcohol use remains the third leading cause of preventable death among Oregonians and is responsible for over 2,000 deaths annually." ⁱ Alcohol can lead to significant problems including liver disease, diabetes, cancer, alcohol dependence and injuries from motor vehicle crashes and violence. Conversely, consuming less alcohol lowers a person's risk for injuries and for developing a chronic disease. Drinking less alcohol also helps people manage existing chronic diseases, including liver disease, cancers and alcohol dependence." ^v

Many people also use cannabis in ways that do not harm them. However, harm does occur and professionals with public health expertise can help inform Oregonians of risks so that they can make informed decisions. Some of the potential harms include mental illness. Despite this, many Oregonians are unaware that cannabis is not an established treatment for depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine's public policy statement on cannabis, "A 2019 meta-analysis of 83 studies reported scarce evidence that cannabis or any type or formulation of medicinal cannabinoids improve depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, Tourette syndrome, PTSD, or psychosis."^{viii}

In 2019 the American Psychiatric Association stated that "there is no current scientific evidence that cannabis is in any way beneficial for the treatment of any psychiatric disorder. Current evidence supports,

at minimum, a strong association of cannabis use with the onset of psychiatric disorders."vi Cannabis has been shown to contribute to risk factors for the onset and symptom severity of substance-induced psychosis and bipolar disorder as well as the onset of depression and anxiety disorders; there is preliminary evidence that ongoing cannabis use in persons with a history of trauma increases the odds of developing PTSD." vii

Some young people may be able to prevent the onset of schizophrenia by reducing or avoiding use of cannabis. NIDA and NIH studied health records data spanning five decades and representing more than 6 million people in Denmark and found that as many as 30% of cases of schizophrenia among men aged 21-30 might have been prevented by averting cannabis use disorder." i

As Addiction Medicine providers, we value the inclusion of people with public health expertise in the OLCC. If we can contribute to health-informed policy and public education, then we can prevent suffering amongst those Oregonians with the greatest risk. We appreciate your efforts to improve public health, and we are glad to contribute any education and medical guidance upon request.

Sincerely,



Katharine Marshall, MD
President, Oregon Society of Addiction Medicine



Moxie Loeffler, DO, MPH, FASAM
Policy Chair and Past President, Oregon Society of Addiction Medicine

- i) Hjorthøj C, Compton W, Starzer M, et al. Association between cannabis use disorder and schizophrenia stronger in young males than in females. *Psychological Medicine*. 2023;53(15):7322-7328. doi:10.1017/S0033291723000880. Available online [2/13/24]: <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/young-men-highest-risk-schizophrenia-linked-cannabis-use-disorder>
- ii) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Behavioral Health Barometer: Oregon, Volume 6: Indicators as measured through the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health and the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services. HHS Publication No. SMA-20-Baro-19-OR. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020.
- iii) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Behavioral Health Barometer: Oregon, Volume 6: Indicators as measured through the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health and the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services. HHS Publication No. SMA-20-Baro-19-OR. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020.
- iv) MHACBO. Oregon Data extracted from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2019 and 2021 reports. Available online: [3/2/23] https://mhacbo.org/media/filer_public/3e/bf/3ebf8e97-83b3-42fa-ba1d-a8e06967d830/2019_epidemiologyweb.pdf
- v) Oregon Health Authority. Excessive Alcohol Use. Available online - [cited 3/2/23] - <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/preventionwellness/excessivealcoholuse/pages/index.aspx>
- vi) American Psychiatric Association. Position Statement in Opposition to Cannabis as Medicine. July 2019. Available at: <file:///C:/Users/susan/Downloads/Position-Cannabis-as-Medicine.pdf>
- vii) Lee JY, Brook JS, Finch SJ, & Brook DW. Trajectories of cannabis use beginning in adolescence associated with symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder in the mid-thirties. *Substance Abuse*. 2018;39:(1)39-45, DOI: 10.1080/08897077.2017.1363121
- viii) Black, N, Stockings, E, Campbell, G, Tran, T. et al. Cannabinoids for the treatment of mental disorders and symptoms of mental disorders: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet Psychiatry* 2019; 6:995-1010
- ix) Lee JY, Brook JS, Finch SJ, & Brook DW. Trajectories of cannabis use beginning in adolescence associated with symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder in the mid-thirties. *Substance Abuse*. 2018;39:(1)39-45, DOI: 10.1080/08897077.2017.1363121