



Non-Psychotropic Cannabinoid Is "Safe," "Well Tolerated" In Humans, Study Says

"CBD is non-toxic ... and does not alter psychomotor or psychological functions"

Sao Paulo, Brazil: The administration of the non-psychotropic cannabis plant constituent [cannabidiol](#) (CBD) is "non-toxic" to healthy cells and is "well tolerated" in humans, according to [review data](#) published online in the scientific journal *Current Drug Safety*.

Investigators at the University of Sao Paulo, Clinical Hospital reviewed over 130 papers assessing the impact of CBD in humans and animals. Studies describing the effects of multiple cannabinoids or CBD extracts were excluded from the analysis.

Authors reported: "Several studies suggest that CBD is well tolerated and safe in humans at high doses and with chronic use. ... [S]tudies suggest that CBD is non-toxic in non-transformed cells and does not induce changes on food intake, does not induce catalepsy [muscular rigidity], does not affect physiological parameters (heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature), does not affect gastrointestinal transit and does not alter psychomotor or psychological functions."

They concluded, "Based on recent advances in cannabinoid administration in humans, controlled CBD may be safe in humans and animals. However,

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Bi-Partisan Group of Governors Call on President Obama to Re-Schedule Marijuana

Olympia, WA, USA: A number of governors from states that have legalized the medical use of marijuana are calling on President Obama to reschedule marijuana federally, to avoid the current conflict with state and federal law.

Independent Governor Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island, Democrat Governors Christine Gregoire of Washington, and Peter Shumlin of

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Hospice Health Professionals Support Legalization Of Cannabis For Therapeutic Use

Philadelphia, PA, USA: A majority of hospice health professionals favor allowing the legally regulated use of cannabis for terminally ill patients, according to [survey data](#) published online in the *Journal of Palliative Medicine*.

Investigators at the University of Pennsylvania utilized a 16-item questionnaire to assess the knowledge, experience, and views of hospice professionals regarding the use of marijuana in terminally

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California: State Lawmaker Meets With US Attorney Regarding Federal Crackdown On Cannabis Providers

San Francisco, CA, USA: California Assemblyman Tom Ammiano [met](#) last week with Melinda Haag, US Attorney for Northern California, to voice his concern over the Justice Department's recent [crackdown](#) on the state's medical cannabis providers.

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NORMLs Top Ten Stories for 2011

#1 NORML Sues To Halt Government's Prosecution of Medical Cannabis Providers

| In October, the United States Deputy Attorney General, along with the four US Attorneys from California, announced their [intentions](#) to escalate federal efforts targeting the state's medical cannabis dispensaries and providers. In response, members of the [NORML Legal Committee](#) [filed suit](#) in November against the federal government arguing that its actions were in violation of the Ninth, Tenth, and Fourteenth

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About MERCY – The Medical Cannabis Resource Center

The MERCY News Report is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit project to record and broadcast news, announcements and information about medical cannabis in Oregon, across America and around the World.

For more information about the MERCY News, contact us.

Via Snail Mail:

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Or our WWW page:

www.MercyCenters.org

Check it out!

MERCY On The Tube!



in Salem, Oregon area thru Capital Community Television, Channel 23. Call In – 503.588-6444 - on Friday at 7pm, or See us on Wednesdays at 06:30pm, Thursdays at 07:00pm, Fridays at 10:30pm and Saturdays at 06:00pm. Visit –

<http://mercycenters.org/tv/>

MERCY is a non-profit, grass roots organization founded by patients, their friends and family and other compassionate and concerned citizens in the area and is dedicated to helping and advocating for those involved with the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program (OMMP). MERCY is based in the Salem, Oregon area and staffed on a volunteer basis.

The purpose is to get medicine to patients in the short-term while working with them to establish their own independent sources. To this end we provide, among other things, ongoing education to people and groups organizing clinics and other Patient Resources, individual physicians and other healthcare providers about the OMMP, cannabis as medicine and doctor rights in general.

The mission of the organization is to help people and change the laws. We advocate reasonable, fair and effective marijuana laws and policies, and strive to educate, register and empower voters to implement such policies. Our philosophy is one of teaching people to fish, rather than being dependent upon others.

Want to get your Card? Need Medicine Now?

Welcome to The Club! MERCY – the Medical Cannabis Resource Center hosts Mercy Club Meetings **every Wednesday** at - **1469 Capital Street NE, Suite #100, Salem, 97301** – from **7pm to 9pm** to help folks get their card, network patients to medicine, assist in finding a grower or getting to grow themselves, or ways and means to medicate along other info and resources depending on the issue. **visit** – www.MercyCenters.org - or Call **503.363-4588** for more.

The Doctor is In ... Salem! * MERCY is Educating

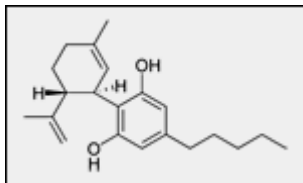
Doctors on signing for their Patients; Referring people to Medical Cannabis Consultations when their regular care physician won't sign for them; and listing all Clinics around the state in order to help folks Qualify for the OMMP and otherwise Get their Cards. For our Referral Doc in Salem, get your records to – **1469 Capital Street NE, Suite #100, Salem, 97301**, NOTE: There is a \$25 non-refundable deposit required. Transportation and Delivery Services available for those in need. For our Physician Packet to educate your Doctor, or a List of Clinics around the state, visit – www.MercyCenters.org - or Call **503.363-4588** for more.

Other Medical Cannabis Resource NetWork Opportunities for Patients as well as CardHolders-to-be. * whether Social meeting,

Open to public –or– Cardholders Only * visit: <http://mercycenters.org/events/Meets.html> ! Also Forums - a means to communicate and network on medical cannabis in Portland across Oregon and around the world. **A list of Forums, Chat Rooms, Bulletin Boards and other Online Resources for the Medical Cannabis Patient, CareGiver, Family Member, Patient-to-Be and Other Interested Parties. * Resources > Patients (plus) > Online > Forums** * Know any? Let everybody else know! Visit: <http://mercycenters.org/orgs/Forums.html> and Post It!

<continued from **NON-PSYCHOTROPIC CANNABINOID IS "SAFE," "WELL TOLERATED" IN HUMANS, STUDY SAYS, page 1** > further studies are needed to clarify these reported *in vitro* and *in vivo* side effects."

Separate investigations of CBD have documented the cannabinoid to possess [a variety of therapeutic properties](#), including anti-inflammatory, anti-diabetic, anti-epileptic, anti-cancer, and bone-stimulating properties. In recent years, patients in states that allow for the use of cannabis therapy, particularly California, have [expressed an interest](#) in plant [strains](#) that contain uniquely high percentages of the compound.



Cannabidiol is presently classified under federal law as a [schedule I](#) prohibited substance. Such substances are required by law to possess "a high potential for abuse," "a lack of accepted safety ... under medical supervision," and "no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Safety and Side Effects of Cannabidiol, a Cannabis Sativa Constituent," appears in *Current Drug Safety*.

<continued from **BI-PARTISAN GROUP OF GOVERNORS CALL ON PRESIDENT OBAMA TO RE-SCHEDULE MARIJUANA, page 1** > Vermont have petitioned the federal government to reschedule marijuana under the federal Controlled Substances Act from Schedule I to Schedule II, which would permit the drug to be prescribed by physicians as a medicine.

"What we have here on the ground is chaos," said Governor Gregoire., adding that patients "who ... either feel like they're criminals or may be engaged in some criminal activity, and really are legitimate patients who want medical marijuana."

Connecticut Democrat Governor Daniel Malloy has said he will also be joining the group of governors petitioning the federal government.

Democrat Governor John Hickenlooper of Colorado has announced that he will be making a similar request to the Obama administration prior to January 1, 2012, as required by state law.

Rescheduling marijuana to a lower schedule under federal law would not authorize medical marijuana dispensaries, such as those that exist under state law in California, Colorado, New Mexico and Maine, and that have been authorized in a handful of

additional states, but it would begin the process of making marijuana available from licensed pharmacists. For more information, please contact NORML Legal Counsel Keith Stroup at keith@norml.org.

<continued from **HOSPICE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS SUPPORT LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS FOR THERAPEUTIC USE, page 1** > ill patients. Authors concluded, "The study results revealed that, like the general public, hospice health care providers are generally in favor of legalization of marijuana and, if legalized, would support its use in symptom management for their terminally ill patients."

Various [health professional organizations](#), including the American Nurses Association and the American Public Health Association, have enacted resolutions in support of allowing patients the legal alternative to use cannabis therapy. For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Assessment of hospice health professional knowledge, views, and experience with medical marijuana," appears in the *Journal of Palliative Medicine*.

<continued from **CALIFORNIA: STATE LAWMAKER MEETS WITH US ATTORNEY REGARDING FEDERAL CRACKDOWN ON CANNABIS PROVIDERS, page 1** > Ammiano said that the meeting with Haag -- who describes cannabis dispensaries as "magnet(s) for crime" and alleges that they "send the wrong message to those in our society who are the most impressionable" -- did "not result in any (policy) changes."

According to a [report](#) in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, Haag offered no specifics at the meeting regarding what actions state lawmakers could take to regulate dispensaries in a manner that would not instigate federal intervention or prosecution. In 2009, Ammiano sponsored legislation to legalize and regulate the commercial production and sale of cannabis for adults age 21 or over. State lawmakers are believed to be considering [legislation](#) in 2012 that would seek to more strictly regulate the state's medical cannabis industry.

Last month, members of the [NORML Legal Committee](#), led by Matt Kumin and David Michael from San Francisco and Alan Silber from Roseland, NJ, [filed suit](#) against the federal government in an [effort](#) to halt the Obama administration's ongoing crackdown on California's medical cannabis producers and providers. For more information, please contact contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500 or visit: <http://www.canorml.org>.

<continued from NORML's TOP TEN STORIES FOR 2011, page 1 > Amendments of the US Constitution. Plaintiffs also argued, using the theory of judicial estoppel, that the Justice Department had previously affirmed in federal court that it would no longer use federal resources to prosecute cannabis patients or providers who are compliant with state law. NORML's lawsuit remains pending. *Read the full story at:*

<http://norml.org/news/2011/11/10/federal-lawsuit-seeks-to-halt-obama-administration-s-crackdown-on-california-s-medical-cannabis-patients-and-providers>.

#2 Members of Congress Introduce First Bill Since 1937 To Legalize Cannabis | House lawmakers [introduced](#) legislation in Congress in June to end the federal criminalization of the personal use of marijuana. The bipartisan measure -- [HR 2306](#), the 'Ending Federal Marijuana Prohibition Act of 2011' -- prohibits the federal government from prosecuting adults who use or possess cannabis by removing the plant and its primary psychoactive constituent, THC, from the five schedules of the United States Controlled Substances Act of 1970. The bill awaits Congressional action. *Read the full story at:*

<http://norml.org/news/2011/06/23/members-of-congress-introduce-first-federal-measure-since-1937-to-legalize-the-adult-use-of-marijuana-bipartisan-coalition-backs-the-ending-federal-marijuana-prohibition-act-of-2011>.

#3 Gallup: Majority of Americans Support Legalizing Cannabis | A record 50 percent of Americans now believe that marijuana ought to be legalized for adult use, according to a nationwide [Gallup Poll](#) of 1,005 adults published in October. The 2011 survey results mark the first time ever that Gallup has reported that more Americans support legalizing cannabis (50 percent) than oppose it (46 percent). *Read the full story at:*

<http://norml.org/news/2011/10/19/gallup-record-percentage-of-americans-now-support-marijuana-legalization>.

#4 Over One Million Americans Now Use Cannabis Legally Under State Law | Between one million to one-and-a-half million US citizens are legally authorized by the laws of their state to use marijuana, according to data compiled in May by NORML from state medical marijuana registries and patient estimates. *Read the full story at:*

<http://stash.norml.org/americas-one-million-legal-marijuana-users>.

#5 Marijuana Prosecutions For 2010 Near Record High | Police made 853,838 arrests in 2010 for marijuana-related offenses according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's annual Uniform Crime Report, released in September. The annual arrest total is among the highest ever reported by the agency. Marijuana arrests now comprise more than one-half (52 percent) of all drug arrests in the United States. *Read the full story at:*

<http://norml.org/news/2011/09/19/marijuana-prosecutions-for-2010-near-record-high>.

#6 Largest State Doctors Association Calls For Legalizing Cannabis | The California Medical Association in October [called for](#) the "legalization and regulation" of cannabis for adults. The association, which represents some 35,000 physicians, [recommends](#) that cannabis be taxed and regulated "in a manner similar to alcohol." *Read the full story at:*

<http://norml.org/news/2011/10/19/california-state-s-largest-doctor-s-association-calls-for-legalizing-and-regulating-cannabis>.

#7 Connecticut Decriminalizes Cannabis Possession Offenses | Statewide [legislation](#) took effect in July reducing the penalties for the adult possession of up to one-half ounce of marijuana from a criminal misdemeanor (formerly punishable by one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine) to a non-criminal infraction, punishable by a \$150 fine, no arrest or jail time, and no criminal record. *Read the full story at:*

<http://norml.org/news/2011/07/07/connecticut-marijuana-infraction-measure-signed-into-law>.

#8 Vaporized Cannabis Augments Analgesic Effect of Opiates in Humans | Vaporized cannabis significantly augments the analgesic effects of opiates in patients with chronic pain, according to clinical trial [data](#) published online in the journal *Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics* in November. Investigators surmised that cannabis-specific interventions "may allow for opioid treatment at lower doses with fewer [patient] side effects." *Read the full story at:*

<http://norml.org/news/2011/11/10/study-vaporized-cannabis-augments-the-analgesic-effects-of-opiates-in-human-subjects>.

#9 State Governors Call on Obama Administration to Reclassify Cannabis | In December, governors from Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington formally requested the Obama administration to reclassify cannabis under federal

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<continued from previous page> law in a manner that would allow states to regulate its therapeutic use without federal interference. The administration in July had previously [rejected](#) a nine-year-old [petition](#) calling on the agency to initiate hearings to reassess the present classification of marijuana as a [schedule I](#) controlled substance without any 'accepted medical use in treatment.' *Read the full story at: <http://norml.org/news/2011/12/08/bi-partisan-group-of-governors-call-on-president-obama-to-re-schedule-marijuana>.*

#10 Delaware Becomes 16th State To Legalize Limited Medical Use of Marijuana | State lawmakers in May approved [legislation](#) to allow patients with a qualifying illness may legally possess up to six ounces of cannabis, provided the cannabis is obtained from a state-licensed, not-for-profit 'compassion center.' The law is anticipated to be implemented in 2012. *Read the full story at: <http://norml.org/news/2011/05/19/delaware-becomes-16th-state-to-legalize-limited-medical-use-of-marijuana>.*

NORML and NORML Foundation are supported by cannabis consumers and other caring citizens. Please make an end of the year [donation](#) to help us keep going strong into 2012. [Donate](#) \$25 or more and receive copies of **both** *Emerging Clinical Applications for Cannabis and Cannabinoids* and *Medical Marijuana Law in California*. --- Thanks from NORML's staff and nationwide chapter network! <http://norml.org/join-norml/tax-deductible-norml-foundation>



Colorado: Justice Department Threatens To Target State-Licensed Cannabis Facilities

Denver, CO, USA: United States Justice Department officials are planning to target the operators of several of the state's licensed cannabis facilities, according to a CBS Denver News [report](#) broadcast last week.

According to the report, Justice Department officials will be targeting facilities alleged to be located within 1,000 feet of schools, regardless of whether the operations are properly licensed by the state, which does not mandate such zoning restrictions.

"Dispensaries that receive the letters will be given 45 days to shut down or move operations. If they

don't comply, they will be shut down by the US attorney in Colorado."

Since 2010, state officials have [explicitly licensed](#) cultivators and dispensers of cannabis for therapeutic purposes. At least [700](#) state-licensed cannabis dispensaries are presently operating in the state.

The federal threat appears to be inconsistent with statements made by US Attorney General Eric Holder before Congress just one week earlier when he [told](#) House Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO) that it "would not be a priority" for federal officials to take actions against "people (who) are acting in conformity with the (state's) law."

In October, United States Deputy Attorney General James Cole, along with the four US Attorneys from California, announced their [intentions](#) to escalate federal efforts targeting the state's medical cannabis dispensaries and providers. Since that time, Justice Department officials have also spearheaded separate actions targeting medical cannabis operations in Montana and [Washington](#).

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500.

Study: Inhaled Cannabis Modulates Appetite Hormones In HIV Patients

San Diego, CA, USA: Cannabis inhalation is associated with increased levels of appetite hormones in the blood of subjects with HIV infection, according to clinical trial [data](#) published online in the scientific journal *Brain Research*.

Investigators at the University of California, San Diego and the [Center for Medicinal Cannabis Research](#) assessed the effects of inhaled cannabis on the appetite hormones ghrelin, leptin and peptide YY (PYY), as well as insulin, in adult subjects with HIV.



Insulin, ghrelin, PYY, and leptin are hormones individually modulated in response to food intake and energy homeostasis.

Researchers reported: "Compared to placebo, cannabis administration was associated with significant increases in plasma levels of ghrelin and

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<continued from previous page> leptin, and decreases in PYY, but did not significantly influence insulin levels. ... Cannabis-related changes in these hormones had a magnitude similar to what has been observed with food intake over the course of a day in normal volunteers, suggesting physiological relevance."

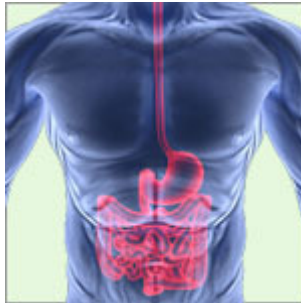
They concluded, "These findings support further evaluations of interventions directed at manipulating the [endocannabinoid system](#) for the treatment of eating disorders and obesity."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "A pilot study of the effects of cannabis on appetite hormones in HIV-infected adult men," appears in *Brain Research*.

Cannabis Beneficial To Patients With Inflammatory Bowel Disease

"Inhaled cannabis improves quality of life measurements, disease activity index, and causes weight gain"

Tel Aviv, Israel: The inhalation of cannabis increases quality of life, mitigates disease activity, and promotes weight gain in subjects with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), according to [clinical trial data](#) published online in the scientific journal *Digestion*.



Investigators at the Chaim Sheba Medical Center in Tel Aviv, Israel assessed the efficacy of inhaled prescription cannabis in patients with long-standing IBD, such as Crohn's disease.

Researchers reported: "After three months' treatment, patients reported improvement in general health perception, social functioning, ability to work, physical pain and depression. A schematic scale of health perception showed an improved score. ... Patients had ... weight gain ... during treatment and an average rise in BMI (body mass index)."

They concluded, "Three months' treatment with inhaled cannabis improves quality of life measurements, disease activity index, and causes weight gain and rise in BMI in long-standing IBD patients."

An estimated 6,000 Israelis [are supplied](#) with locally grown cannabis for therapeutic purposes as part of a limited government program.

[Survey data](#) published in August in the *European Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology* [reported](#) that an estimated one-third of patients with colitis and one-half of subjects with Crohn's acknowledge having used cannabis to [mitigate their disease symptoms](#).

Most recently, clinical trial data published in September in the *Journal of the Israeli Medical Association* reported that the use of cannabis is associated with a reduction in Crohn's disease activity and disease-related surgeries.

Researchers at the Meir Medical Center in Israel are [presently evaluating](#) the safety and efficacy of inhaled cannabis for patients with Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis in a double-blind, placebo-controlled trial, according to a summary of the US federal government website [clinicaltrials.gov](#). For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Impact of Cannabis Treatment on the Quality of Life, Weight and Clinical Disease Activity in Inflammatory Bowel Disease Patients: A Pilot Prospective Study," appears in *Digestion*.

Bay Area Mobile Cannabis Lab Launches to Conveniently Test Medical Marijuana Quality

Fairfield, CA (PRWEB) | Botanitec, an innovative new Bay Area mobile cannabis lab, has just been launched to bring state-of-the-art quality testing services directly to the source. The new third-party mobile testing lab provides on-site efficient, affordable, high-quality analysis of medical marijuana with an emphasis on data integrity. The marijuana testing service ensures quality through purity testing, potency testing, and the CannaQA safety certification program.

Botanitec, Inc. was founded by Mary Williams, who has a background as a mechanical engineer and nursing home administrator. Her experience in nursing home management exposed her to the world of cannabis, and she recognized immediately the real need patients have for the therapeutic effects of this healing herb, and especially its value to the aging baby boomers in our society. As she became more interested in the medicinal value of cannabis, she realized her experience in quality control in the aerospace and tool manufacturing industries would be valuable in the emerging cannabis industry, so she decided to create a new model of analytical testing.

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<continued from previous page> Mary formed the company with other engineers and biological scientists with solid laboratory principles and protocols as its foundation. Botanitec's policies and procedures are based on a rigorous process of validation to report test results with 95% confidence levels based on proven statistics to assure results are both reproducible and repeatable. The Botanitec team members have years of experience in supply chain management, product safety testing, and developing QA/QC systems that they are excited to bring to the medical marijuana industry.

"Our mission is to push quality upstream and work with dispensaries and cultivators in developing test plans, which will ensure patients receive top quality products from a competent supply chain," explains Mary.

The mobile cannabis lab allows Botanitec to test and certify product at the source, reducing risk of contamination. Botanitec screens for chemical contaminants (insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides), biological contaminants (bacteria, fungus, viruses and parasites), and physical material hazards (bug parts, metal, plastic, soil, etc.). The Bay Area marijuana testing service also tests for potency (THC, CBD and CBN content) and moisture levels.

There are currently no uniform quality control standards for medical cannabis, so Botanitec created the CannaQA Certification Program to give medicinal marijuana patients assurance that products bearing the seal are certified safe by an unbiased third party. CannaQA certification includes nitrogen-sealed packaging to preserve purity, a certificate of conformity bearing the testing lot number, a label on each bag with test results, a tamper-proof CannaQA card for dispensary/website display, a Patient Portal where patients can access a password-protected website to see the test results on their medical marijuana, and HIPPA level client confidentiality.

"We've found patients want two simple questions answered regarding their medical marijuana: 'Am I getting what I'm paying for?' and 'Is this free of contaminants that are bad for my body?'" explains Mary. "Botanitec provides answers to these questions and more."

Implementing strong cannabis quality assurance and control systems and certification with lot date code traceability ensures the medical cannabis patients receive is of the highest quality possible. Botanitec provides the information medical marijuana patients need to know their medicine is safe and comes from

a tested source that demonstrates concern for patient health and safety. # # # Read more at: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/g/a/2012/01/04/prweb9076401.DTL#ixzz1ijDsmdhE> | This item courtesy of the Daily Buzz, a FREE industry newsletter for cannabis professionals.

Federal Agency Recognizes Cannabis Fights Cancer

In March, an agency of the U.S. federal government for the first time acknowledged that cannabis has been shown to fight cancer, and said health care providers may recommend it for that purpose. But after five days of media attention, the National Cancer Institute removed from its website any mention that cannabis may be used to combat tumors.

The NCI originally said that "the health care provider may recommend medicinal Cannabis not only for symptom management but also for its possible direct antitumor effect." That directly contradicts the federal government's oft-repeated contention that cannabis has no medical use.

The NCI website still notes that "cannabis has been used for medicinal purposes for thousands of years," and says people living with cancer may find cannabis effective for combating nausea, stimulating appetite, relieving pain, and improving sleep. It also classifies cannabis as a Complementary Alternative Medicine (CAM) and summarizes several decades of research on the potential role of cannabis and its constituent chemicals in cancer treatment.

The antitumor effects of cannabinoids include reducing the spread of cancer cells, selectively cutting off the blood supply to tumors, and reprogramming malignant cells to die off. Researchers have demonstrated these effects on human cancer lines including skin, breast, bone, liver, adrenal, leukemic and brain cancers. More information at:

http://www.safeaccessnow.org/downloads/ASA_jan_2012_newsletter.pdf

Trio of Medical Cannabis Bills Introduced in Congress

Three bipartisan medical cannabis bills were introduced in Congress in 2011 with support from

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<continued from TRIO OF MEDICAL CANNABIS BILLS INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS, previous page> ASA and other patient advocates. The bills would respectively reclassify cannabis as a drug with medical use, protect access to financial services for patients and providers, and rein in aggressive audits of providers by the IRS.



HR 1983, the State's Medical Marijuana Protection Act of 2011, would provide a medical necessity defense in federal court and reclassify cannabis from a Schedule I substance with no medical use to Schedule III, a level that would allow doctors to prescribe it like other medications.

HR 1984, the Small Business Banking Improvement Act of 2011, would allow banks and other financial institutions to provide services to medical marijuana businesses without being subject to "suspicious activity" reporting requirements. Several banks have closed the accounts of medical cannabis providers under pressure from the Department of Treasury.

HR 1985, the Small Business Tax Equity Act of 2011, would change the federal tax code "to allow a deduction for expenses in connection with the trade or business of selling marijuana intended for patients for medical purposes pursuant to State law." The IRS has been aggressively auditing dozens of the most successful medical cannabis dispensing centers, disallowing their operating expense deductions and claiming back taxes.

More information at:
http://www.safeaccessnow.org/downloads/ASA_jan2012_newsletter.pdf

ASA Builds Grassroots with Trainings and Online Tools

ASA expanded its grassroots support nationwide last year through online activist bootcamps, web-based training tools, an ASA Advocates App, and roaming stakeholder meetings.

In February activists from coast to coast gathered for ASA's first virtual conference, a two-day "Activist Boot Camp" of trainings that combined a more than 300-page workbook of materials with informational DVDs.

Virtual bootcamp participants from Denver to Detroit, Portland to Chicago, Las Vegas to St. Louis, learned about effective outreach, coalition building, leadership development, lobbying public officials, organizing protests and rallies, and working with the media.

ASA also spent the year holding in-person stakeholders' meetings and raid preparedness trainings in Colorado, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington, as well as throughout California.

Facilitated by ASA Executive Director Steph Sherer and California Director Don Duncan, the meetings helped participants share experiences and identify goals, problems and solutions. The raid preparedness trainings gave community members tools and strategies for responding to interference by law enforcement.

In response to ideas generated in the stakeholders' meetings, ASA launched an online initiative to give advocates 24/7 access to lobbying tools, an information center, and tools for rapid response to federal raids.

The [Medical Cannabis Think Tank and Policy Shop](#) provides the information and support activists need to analyze pending or proposed legislation and to lobby officials for the best laws possible.

The [ASA Online Training Center](#) gives advocates access to all ASA's training and educational materials, including streaming video presentations and comprehensive manuals and worksheets for developing advocacy skills.

ASA also improved its [Raid Response Center](#) to better cope with federal interference, including how to prepare for and respond to law enforcement actions.

In December the [ASA App](#) launched, putting a full range of ASA tools and information in the hands of advocates through iPhones and iPads. The app will be available on Android this spring.

Visit http://www.safeaccessnow.org/downloads/ASA_jan2012_newsletter.pdf for More Information, like - [Think Tank & Policy Shop](#) [Online Training Center](#) [Raid Response Center](#) [ASA App for iPhone & iPad](#)