

Medical Cannabis (Access) Bill

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Explanatory notes to the Bill, prepared by Jeff Smith MP, are published separately as Bill 20—EN.

Medical Cannabis (Access) Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

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[AS INTRODUCED]

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TO

Make provision about access to cannabis for medical reasons; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 General Medical Council register of General Practitioners who may prescribe cannabis

(1) The Medical Act 1983 is amended as follows.

(2) After section 34C (the specialist register) insert—

“34CA General Practitioners who may prescribe cannabis

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(1) The General Council must keep a register of medical practitioners contained on the general register who may prescribe cannabis-based products.

(2) The General Council must publish a scheme making provision about—
 (a) the criteria to be considered in determining whether a person
 may be included in the register under subsection (1), and
 (b) associated training and professional development requirements.

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(3) Participation in the scheme by a general practitioner must be—
 (a) optional, and
 (b) at the initiative of the general practitioner.”

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2 Registered general practitioners to be permitted to prescribe cannabis

(1) Regulation 16A (orders, supply and use of cannabis-based products for administration) of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 (S.I. 2001/3998) are amended as follows.

(2) At the end of subsection (1)(a)(ii) insert—

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“or, in England, a doctor included in the register of General Practitioners who may prescribe cannabis kept under section 34CA of the Medical Act 1983”.

- (3) At the end of subsection (2)(b)(i) insert –
 “or, in England, a doctor included in the register of General Practitioners who may prescribe cannabis kept under section 34CA of the Medical Act 1983”.

3 Commission on cannabis-based medicines

- (1) The Secretary of State must establish a Commission to – 5
 (a) propose a framework for the assessment of cannabis-based medicines and their suitability for prescription in England, and
 (b) make recommendations of measures to overcome barriers to access to cannabis from the National Health Service in England for medical reasons. 10
- (2) The Commission must consider including in the framework under subsection (1)(a) evidence from –
 (a) observational studies,
 (b) conventional controlled trials, and
 (c) other countries in which cannabis-based medicines are more widely available. 15
- (3) The Commission must consider how the licensing criteria for cannabis-based medicines should interact with those used for conventional medicines.
- (4) The Commission must consult – 20
 (a) the National Institute for Clinical Excellence,
 (b) the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs,
 (c) the National Institute for Health Research,
 (d) the National Health Service,
 (e) general practitioners,
 (f) medical practitioners experienced in the prescription of cannabis-based products, 25
 (g) persons with conditions that may be alleviated by the use of cannabis-based medicines, and
 (h) other expert groups and persons as the Commission sees fit.
- (5) In this section, “cannabis-based medicines” includes whole plant cannabis products. 30
- (6) The Secretary of State must, before the end of the period of 30 days beginning with the day on which this Act is passed, appoint an independent person to lead the Commission.
- (7) The person appointed under subsection (7) must appoint other persons to the Commission, with the objective of ensuring that the membership of the Commission has – 35
 (a) expertise in cannabis-based medicines,
 (b) a range of views on the merits of providing wider access to cannabis-based medicines, and 40
 (c) experience in countries where cannabis-based medicines are more readily available than in England.

- (8) The Commission must provide a report of its findings to the Secretary of State before the end of the period of six months beginning on the day on which the independent person is appointed under subsection (7).
- (9) The Secretary of State must lay that report before Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

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4 Extent, commencement and short title

- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales only.
- (2) This comes into force on the day on which it is passed.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Medical Cannabis (Access) Bill 2021.

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Presented by Jeff Smith

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be
Printed, 21st June 2021.

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