Cannabis Awareness
Information about cannabis for consumers and carers
This booklet has been developed by the Statewide Deafness and Mental Health Service and other stakeholders to be used as a resource in educating Deaf people about Cannabis.

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What is Cannabis?

Cannabis is a drug.

Cannabis comes from two types of plants known as ‘Cannabis Sativa’ or ‘Cannabis Indica’.

Cannabis has other names too...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dope</th>
<th>Yarndi</th>
<th>Choof</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pot</td>
<td>Gunja</td>
<td>Grass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weed</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Hash (oil/liquid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cone</td>
<td>Stick</td>
<td>Marijuana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Jane</td>
<td>Mull</td>
<td>Hashish (resin/wax)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ways cannabis is used

Cannabis plant leaves and flowers are dried, but sometimes cannabis **hashish** (resin) or **hash** (oil) is used.

Cannabis can be smoked, inhaled (breathing in), or eaten (cooked in food).
Cannabis and the body

When smoked, a chemical called THC (pg. 25), the main part of cannabis that makes a person feel ‘high’, travels through the blood stream.

**NB.**

**CBD** (Cannabidiol) is from the cannabis plant too, but has no ‘high’ and is often used as a medicine for health problems e.g. seizures, cancer, etc.

There are different levels of CBD and THC in cannabis plants. But people who grow the plants usually want the ‘high’ THC.
The effects of cannabis

Depends on...

- How often it is used e.g. once only or daily

- How strong it is.

  - This depends on which part of the plant and strain of plant is used. Plants are carefully selected to crossbreed to increase the level of ‘high’ (THC).
• It depends on the tool and the amount of cannabis used.

![Images of Rolled joint, Pipe, Vaporiser, Bong]

• It depends on the person’s mood at the time of taking cannabis.

![Images of Happy and Sad]

• Friends can influence how much cannabis is used.
• If the cannabis is mixed with other drugs or alcohol.

• Age
Young people can have developmental and social problems when using cannabis early in life. It can sometimes effect...

Memory

Mental health

Learning

School work

Behaviour problems
The body’s reaction to cannabis

Here are some short and long-term effects of being ‘high’ that can sometimes lead to negative responses.

- Laughing lots
- Feeling relaxed and/or tired
- A dry mouth and throat
- Feeling unwell
- Slower movements
- Bloodshot (red) eyes
Talking lots

Hungry/eating lots

Hallucinating (seeing things and hearing sounds)

Poor coordination when driving or walking
Feeling depressed

Poor concentration and memory

A racing heart and breathing problems

Risk of psychosis

Panic and anxiety
Mixing cannabis with tobacco

When smoking cannabis with tobacco there is a higher chance of lung cancer and other health risks like...

- Nicotine dependence
- A sore throat
- Asthma/wheezing
- Bronchitis
Mental health risks

For some people, cannabis use from an early age or long-term cannabis use can make mental health problems worse.

Mood changes

Poor thinking: finding it hard to learn and remember.

Sometimes cannabis can lead to schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders.
Social impacts of cannabis

Poor schoolwork

Money problems

Relationship issues

Withdrawal/isolation from family and friends

When in trouble with the law, it can make it harder with...

Relationships  Accommodation  Employment  Travel
Problems with family

If mothers use cannabis during pregnancy or while breastfeeding, babies can have memory or concentration problems.

Being late or not going to school, work or having accidents can lead to a job loss.
When cannabis is a problem

Using cannabis often, can lead to a **cannabis use disorder** which means a person becomes dependent on the drug and it becomes harder to stop.

Signs of problems to look for...

- Taking a long time getting, using or recovering from the side effects.
- Wanting to use cannabis more and more.
- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms.
Cannabis withdrawal

When stopping after long term cannabis use, these feelings might happen for a week or so...

1. Sweats
2. Feeling sick
3. Tremors/shakes

- It may take time to get a better night’s sleep.
- Cravings (wanting to take cannabis again)
Cannabis is illegal

In Queensland, people cannot...

• Grow/cultivate cannabis.

• Use, sell or share cannabis with other people.

• Have cannabis in the car, house or on your person.

• Have used utensils (tools) or plan to use these utensils for illegal drugs.

Bongs

Scales
• Driving after cannabis use. The court could fine you, cancel the driving licence and send you to jail.

• If caught with any amount of cannabis, it could be time in jail.

• It is against the law to supply (give/sell) cannabis to any person.

Did you know?
Drug tests can show cannabis in...
  - Blood up to 36 hours.
  - Urine/Pee up to 90 days for heavy users.
  - Saliva, approx. 4 – 12 hours, depending on use.

Minimising harm. In the community, there are services and policies to reduce and prevent harm. These services help people to make decisions and choices and keep people safe. They are...

  • Educational programs
  • Warnings on tobacco packets
  • Counselling services
Harm Minimisation

- When trying cannabis for the first time try a small dose.
- Try not to hold smoke in your lungs more than 2-5 seconds. Holding your breath will not make the ‘high’ stronger.
- Smoke in a safe place with friends you trust.
- Using a vaporiser is better than a joint or bong. There is less chance of health problems.
- Look after mates.
- Don’t mix with tobacco. This can increase the risk of cancer or dependence.
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- Don’t mix cannabis with other drugs. It can be dangerous.
- Beware of man-made cannabis. It can look like cannabis, but it is not and can be very dangerous.
- Don’t drive after using cannabis. It is illegal.
Carer information

Worried that someone you care about is using Cannabis?

• Think about what to say to the person.

• Think how to approach the person.

• Choose a quiet place and time so there are no interruptions.

• Listen to the person and understand their reason for using cannabis. Don’t blame!

• Don’t name call. Addict, stoner or pothead won’t help to support the person.

• Use “I” statements not “you” and explain your concerns on how the drug use impacts on you.

• Ask the person if they would like support from a professional.
Where to get help

Talk through the National Relay Service (NRS) or the Video Relay Service (VRS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NABS (National Auslan Interpreter Booking and Payment Service)</td>
<td>1800 448 448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADIS (Alcohol and Drug Information Service)</td>
<td>1800 177 833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300 MH Call</td>
<td>1300 64 22 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headspace</td>
<td>1800 650 890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Alcohol and Other Drug Hotline</td>
<td>1800 250 015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids Helpline</td>
<td>1800 551 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of Family Drug Support (FDS)</td>
<td>1300 368 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrelink crisis payment for financial help</td>
<td>13 2850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeline</td>
<td>13 11 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf Services</td>
<td>3892 8500 or TTY 3892 8501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Aid</td>
<td>1300 65 11 88 or TTY service (07) 3238 3023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your local doctor</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Emergency numbers

Contact emergency services if someone needs urgent medical attention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency Contacts</th>
<th>Contact number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice – Phone, Captioned Relay or Internet Relay</td>
<td>000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS Relay</td>
<td>0423 677 767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak and listen</td>
<td>1300 555 727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by TTY, Police (type PPP), ambulance (type AAA)</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak and read – say ambulance or police</td>
<td>1800 555 727 and ask for triple zero (000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Relay Service (VRS)</td>
<td>login to skype and contact an NRS contact name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policelink (non – urgent)</td>
<td>SMS 0437 131 444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** You will need to give your address or location.
Glossary

- **Bronchitis** – a sickness that causes coughing, wheezing, aches and pain as well as feeling short of breath.

- **Cannabidiol** – a chemical found in the Cannabis Sativa plant.

- **Coordination** – Using different parts of the body to move and work together smoothly.

- **Crossbreed** – mixing a part or a variety of plant/s with another.

- **Functioning** – how the body and brain work together.

- **Minimisation** – to decrease or reduce something.

- **Nicotine** – is an addictive stimulant found in tobacco and can be highly toxic in concentrated forms i.e. e-cig juice.

- **Psychosis** – is an illness that affects the mind. It might cause a person to see, hear, feel and believe things that are not real.

- **Resin** – a soft or hard substance taken from a plant.

- **Saliva** – watery liquid in the mouth. Helps with swallowing.

- **Stimulant** – a drug that raises excitement in the body and mind e.g. more alertness, increased speech, less sleep.

- **THC - Delta-9 Tetrahydrocannabinol** is a chemical found in a cannabis plant that causes a ‘high’ excited happy wellness feeling.

- **Toxic** – a harmful substance that is bad for the body and can cause illness.
Resources and Websites


7. Australia’s National Research Centre on AOD Workforce Development


Ask a friend, family member or health professional to help if serious about stopping cannabis.

Deafness and Mental Health Service

SMS: 0419 023 883
Email: Deafness_MHS@health.qld.gov.au
Disclaimer

The material and information in this booklet is for educational purposes only. The information is not intended to replace medical advice offered by clinicians, but to assist Deaf people and other low language users with understanding health issues. Consumers should review the information with their professional health care provider. The Deafness and Mental Health Service will not be held liable for any direct, indirect, consequential, special, exemplary, or other damages arising there from.