

Cannabis Legalization in Canada: Implications for Public Health in Alberta

University of Calgary, Downtown Campus (906 8 Ave SW, Calgary, AB)

Friday, May 5th, 2017

FINAL PROGRAM

Registration & Coffee (Doors open at 8:15am – please join us for a light breakfast)

9-10am Welcome and Context Setting

Welcome on behalf of the O'Brien Institute for Public Health

Dr. Bill Ghali, Scientific Director, *O'Brien Institute for Public Health*

Setting the Context: 'Public science' and citizenship engagement

Dr. Aleem Bharwani, Director, *Public Policy and Strategic Partnerships, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary*

Cannabinoids 101: Understanding the endocannabinoid system

Dr. Matt Hill, Associate Professor, *Hotchkiss Brain Institute and Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research and Education, University of Calgary*

10am-12pm Theme 1: Medical Use and Access in the Context of Legalization

Perspectives on Access and Social Stigma from Patients and Medical Users

Panel participants: Ryan Magnusson; Holly Rachynski, Sarah Wilkinson

Moderator: Dr. Eric Wasylenko, Clinical Associate Professor, *Division of Palliative Medicine, Department of Oncology, Cumming School of Medicine University of Calgary*; Clinical Lecturer, *John Dossetor Health Ethics Center, University of Alberta*

Clinician Perspectives on Medical Cannabis

Dr. Lori Montgomery, Medical Director, *AHS (Calgary) Chronic Pain Centre*

Dr. Richie Sinha, Clinical Assistant Professor, *Radiation Oncology, Tom Baker Cancer Centre*

Dr. Sana-Ara Ahmed, Medical Director, *The Health Boutique*

Lunch (Free; provided onsite)

1-3pm Theme 2: Public Health and Cannabis Legalization in Canada

The Canadian Context for Cannabis Policy and Public Health Approaches to Substance Use

Dr. Cam Wild; Co-Lead, *CRISM Prairie Node*; Professor, *School of Public Health, University of Alberta*

Cannabis in the Alberta Context: Survey results and systematic review findings

Dr. Fiona Clement; Director, *Health Technology Assessment Unit, University of Calgary*

Considerations for Alberta Health Services

Dr. Brent Friesen; Provincial Lead Medical Officer of Health, *Safe & Healthy Environments & Tobacco Reduction Program, Alberta Health Services*

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: Legalization In Canada - Understanding the Policy Landscape

Dr. Beau Kilmer; *Senior Policy Researcher and Co-director, RAND Drug Policy Research Center*

3:00-4:30pm Theme 3: Innovations in Youth Prevention and Policy

Preventing Cannabis-related Harm: Considerations for youth and beyond

Dr. Elaine Hyshka; Assistant Professor, *School of Public Health, University of Alberta*

Preparing for Cannabis Legalization in Canada: Priorities for youth

Jenna Valleriani; PhD (Cand.), *University of Toronto*; Strategic Advisor, *Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy*

The Forgotten Victims of Canada's Pot Laws: Justice for racialized and Indigenous youth

Dr. Akwasi Owusu-Bempah; Assistant Professor, *Department of Sociology, University of Toronto*

4:30 Brief Summary and Close

Peter Fenwick, CHE; Lead, *Member Relations, Southern Alberta Chapter, Canadian College of Health Leaders*

Dr. Rebecca Haines-Saah; Assistant Professor, *Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary*

EVENT OVERVIEW

Please join us for a public forum focused on cannabis legalization and public health policies in Alberta. As Canada moves towards legalization, our event is a unique opportunity to participate in discussions with some of Alberta's leaders in substance use and public health and to learn from U.S. and Canadian policy experts about the experiences of legalization from other jurisdictions. We will also explore the impact of legalization on patients using for medical purposes, and highlight implications for clinicians and healthcare leaders in both recreational and medical use contexts.



The keynote presentation is from Beau Kilmer, PhD, who is a senior policy researcher at the RAND Corporation, where he codirects the RAND Drug Policy Research Center. Recognized internationally as an expert in cannabis legalization policies, his research lies at the intersection of public health and public safety, with a special emphasis on crime control, substance use, illicit markets, and public policy. He is the co-author of the book *Marijuana Legalization – What everyone needs to know* (2016), now in its second printing with Oxford University Press.

Also featured is a panel conversation with Albertans who have used medicinal cannabis as a key component of their own health and chronic disease management; discussing the ethical challenges they've faced in obtaining and maintaining access in a context where stigma and gaps in knowledge about the parameters of the ACMPR are barriers.

We look forward to your joining us and being a part of the 'public health conversation' about the implications of cannabis legalization for our province.



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O'Brien Institute for Public Health



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CANADIAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE IN SUBSTANCE MISUSE



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Eventbrite link: <http://bit.ly/2nyedHH>

Twitter Hashtag: [#CannabisYYC](https://twitter.com/CannabisYYC)

Questions: rebecca.saah@ucalgary.ca

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Akwasi Owusu-Bempah PhD: Dr. Owusu-Bempah is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Toronto, Mississauga. His work focuses on the intersections of race, crime and criminal justice, with a particular interest in the area of policing. His recent research projects include: a study of Black males' perceptions of and experiences with the police in Greater Toronto Area (including the experiences of both civilians and police officers); a review of race-based data collection within the Canadian criminal justice system; and an examination of citizen perceptions of criminal injustice in Canada and the United States. His research has recently been published in *Policing and Society*, *Crime and Justice*, and *The Walrus*.

Cam Wild PhD: I study psychosocial aspects of addiction and mental health and my research interests span etiology, prevention and treatment, and include: problem drinking, injection drug use, smoking, comorbid addictions and mental disorders, treatment systems, and the use of social policy. Although these are diverse interests, a common thread uniting them is a core theoretical emphasis on the interplay between social influence and motivational processes. Almost all of my research interests include a strong community focus, which involves extensive collaboration with health policy makers, practitioners and other non-academic stakeholders to ensure the relevance and uptake of our findings.

Elaine Hsyhka PhD: I am a health services and policy researcher focused on advancing a public health approach to substance use by: (1) evaluating novel interventions designed to reduce the health, social, and economic costs of drug and alcohol use; (2) analyzing the social, legal and political determinants of substance use policy and practice; and (3) examining health inequities and service barriers faced by socially marginalized populations experiencing problematic drug or alcohol use. I am committed to engaged scholarship, and my research is conducted in partnership with several local, provincial, and national-level service providers, policymakers, and public health advocacy organizations. Beyond my faculty position, I am the Scientific Director of the Royal Alexandra Hospital's Inner City Health and Wellness Program.

Eric Wasylenko MD MHSc (bioethics): Eric is a palliative care physician and clinical ethicist. He currently consults to the Health Quality of Council of Alberta as Medical Director, Health System Ethics and Policy. Eric chairs the Ethics Consultative Group of the Public Health Agency of Canada and is a member of the Canadian Medical Association's Committee on Ethics and the CMA's Code of Ethics Review Task Force. He has held leadership roles in a number of health care agencies and organizations and been instrumental in development of ground-breaking palliative and end of life care programs.

Fiona Clement PhD: Dr. Clement has extensive training in Health Services Research, Health Economics and Health Policy. She is the Director of the Health Technology Assessment Unit within the O'Brien Institute of Public Health; a policy responsive research unit that completes evidence synthesis, economic evaluations, health technology assessments and reassessments in response to decision-makers' needs. Her research interests include drug and non-drug technology reimbursement and cost containment policy, evidence in decision-making, and evidence in health policy development. In 2015 she was the recipient of the Maurice McGregor Award from the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health, an award that recognizes rising stars in the field of health technology assessment early in their careers.

Holly Rachynski: Fibromyalgia Fighter, Working mom of 2, Kids Yoga Teacher in Training, Patient & Family Centred Care and Medicinal Cannabis Advocate.

Jenna Valleriani PhD (Cand.): Jenna Valleriani is a PhD candidate in Sociology and the Collaborative Program in Addiction Studies at the University of Toronto. Her research looks at social movements, entrepreneurship and the emergence of new industries. Her dissertation is titled, “ ‘The Green Rush’: Social Movements, Entrepreneurship and the Emerging Medical Cannabis Industry in Canada.” Jenna serves as a Strategic Policy Advisor for Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy (CSSDP), is a member of the steering committee for the Canadian Drug Policy Coalition (CDPC) and is a frequent commentator on youth and cannabis policies in Canadian media.

Lori Montgomery MD CCFP: Lori is a family physician trained at the University of Calgary. She completed a chronic pain fellowship program in Calgary which included headache, pelvic pain, neuromusculoskeletal pain and palliative home care. Her clinical practice includes patients with neuromusculoskeletal pain, headache and problem drug use at the Chronic Pain Centre and hospital inpatients with the Chronic Pain Consult Service at the four adult acute care hospitals. She is medical director of the Calgary Pain Program’s Chronic Pain Centre, and is involved in teaching of medical students, residents, and practicing professionals.

Matthew Hill PhD: Dr. Hill’s research is focused on understanding the mechanisms by which stress impacts the brain, with a particular focus on the circuits and signals that regulate changes in anxiety and hormone release following stress. A large portion of Dr. Hill’s work has focused on the endocannabinoid system, the brain’s natural version of cannabis (similar to how endorphins are the brain’s natural version of morphine). The Hill laboratory has found that endocannabinoid signaling in the brain largely acts to dampen the effects of stress. They have also demonstrated that stress hormones drive an increase in endocannabinoid activity in the brain and that this increase in endocannabinoids is required to end the stress response. Dr. Hill holds a Tier II Canada Research Chair in the Neurobiology of Stress and was the 2016 Canadian Association of Neuroscience Young Investigator awardee. He is the President-elect of the International Cannabinoid Research Society.

Ryan Magnusson: I am a Volunteer Patient Advisor for Alberta Health Services. I am a Full Time Patient and Dad, and also the previous CEO/President of one of Canada’s fastest growing companies – 1999, Branch Manager – Canada Trust 1987 – 1999. Severely ill and disabled since 2004, I use my experiences from business and my journey through the healthcare system to advise all levels of AHS in Patient and Family Centered Care, Quality and Safety. I have been very successful in bringing the patient view to our ongoing healthcare improvements.

Dr. Sana-Ara Ahmed MD FRCPC: Sana-Ara is a specialist in Anesthesiology & Pain Medicine in clinical practice in Alberta, Ontario & BC. She received her MD from the University of Saskatchewan in 2006 & completed her Anesthesiology residency training in 2011 at the University of British Columbia before joining St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto as a Staff Anesthesiologist in 2012. In 2014, Dr. Ahmed expanded her clinical practice into private holistic chronic pain management and has established a niche in the use of medical cannabis for pain management and quality of life improvement. Dr. Ahmed is on the medical advisory board for Doctors for Responsible Access in Canada, and is an established CME medical educator for physicians and allied health professionals regarding the use of medical cannabis for chronic pain.

Sarah Wilkinson: Sarah is a prominent cannabis activist, co-founder of Mia’s Temple and proud mother of three. When Mia, her youngest, was born with a rare seizure disorder, Sarah began a journey with cannabis to heal. Now as co-founder of Mia’s Temple, Sarah is able to help many more in need of education about medicinal cannabis.