



September 22, 2021

To: MedStar Health Physician Leadership Council
MedStar Medical Group Executive Team
MedStar Medical Group Governing Council
MedStar Health Chiefs and Chairs
MedStar Health Program Directors

Subject: Updated Medical Marijuana Guidelines

As medical marijuana (also known as medical cannabis) has become legal in a growing number of states, including Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia, we understand MedStar Health providers have questions about its use across MedStar Health locations.

Although Maryland and the District law permits the medical use of marijuana for registered patients with a qualifying condition, **MedStar Health prohibits patients from possessing or using medical marijuana at any MedStar Health entity.** While the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has expanded the available research into potential uses of marijuana products, they currently remain Schedule I controlled substances under federal law, with no accepted medical use, and cannot be legally prescribed or possessed. Marijuana extracts, including tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD), are also listed as Schedule I substances. We monitor for possible future federal changes, but this is current law.

MedStar Health receives federal funds and certifies that it complies with federal law. Accordingly, MedStar Health providers should not “prescribe” medical marijuana, and MedStar Health locations cannot dispense or store medical marijuana. We recognize patient interest and evidence that some patients may benefit from medical marijuana. Patients **may** be referred to other providers for medical marijuana.

Patients in a MedStar Health entity with medical marijuana (in any form, including food), must be instructed to remove it from the premises. If the patient is unconscious or incapacitated, the patient’s next of kin must remove the drug (in any form). The marijuana cannot be kept with the patient’s personal belongings or stored at any MedStar Health entity. If these substances cannot be removed, they should be disposed in Cactus sinks.

Although marijuana is not legal under federal law for medical use, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved certain products. Epidiolex is a pharmacy-grade product composed almost entirely of CBD and is approved for use in treating childhood epilepsy. Marinol (dronabinol), Cesamet (nabilone) and Syndros (liquid dronabinol) are synthetic marijuana derivatives approved by the FDA. As with any FDA-approved product, these may be prescribed for appropriate off-label uses.

Please immediately share this information with your providers. Additionally, discuss medical marijuana during huddles, rounding and department meetings.

If you have questions about MedStar Health guidelines for medical marijuana, please let us know. Thank you for your partnership.