

# **British Phytomedicines Alliance – Policy Briefing**

## **About The BPA**

The British Phytomedicines Alliance was founded in May 2023 – established as the leading body representing the UK cannabis-based medicines industry.

Its founder members are Glass Pharms, Celadon Pharmaceuticals and Phytome Life Sciences.

Our members are at the cutting-edge of phytomedicinal drug development, creating hundreds of high-quality jobs across the UK and raising many millions in investment to support the industry's growth.

The BPA actively engages policy makers to ensure the value and full potential of this industry can be realised – and to deliver the best possible outcomes for patients.

With the right backing, BPA members can build a global success story for the British life sciences sector – and make a life-changing difference for millions of people currently suffering with chronic health conditions.

## **Policy Objectives**

### **CLEAR GOVERNMENT BACKING FOR OUR INDUSTRY**

- We are seeking a firm commitment from UK government to support the growth of cannabis-based medicines as a British life sciences success story with significant potential to improve patients' lives.
- A designated senior civil servant to liaise with our industry, armed with the authority to co-ordinate support across Whitehall.

### **REGULATORY CERTAINTY AND MORE EFFECTIVE LICENSING**

- A clearer and more consistent implementation of existing licensing procedures and scheduling, ensuring that enforcement complies with the spirit and intention of the law since the legalisation of cannabis-based medicines in 2018.
- Additional workforce capacity in Home Office case management for licensing requirements is also needed, including faster resolution of applications and dedicated case officers.

### **BETTER EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON PRESCRIPTION**

- Government support for widespread education on the human endocannabinoid system and how cannabis-based medicines work; including better training for GPs and specialist consultants to give them the knowledge and confidence to prescribe.

## **Why Support Our Industry?**

## IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF OUR NATION

- Cannabis-based medicines can be effective additions to the treatment of serious health conditions such as chronic pain or epilepsy, with growing real world clinical evidence of success from countries like Australia and Germany.
- There are substantial unmet medical needs in UK for treatment of chronic pain. This is a silent epidemic, with 8 million sufferers and limited treatment options given the significant downsides of opioid-based medicines.
- Conditions like chronic pain are expensive to manage at a time of squeezed health budgets- costing an estimated £10 billion a year. Cannabis-based medicines can provide a cost-effective alternative to other interventions.
- Cannabis-based medicines are a valuable alternative to opioid-based medicines. A recent study of more than 400 UK medical cannabis patients with chronic pain showed 59.9% stopped all usage of opioid-based medicines and there was a statistically significant reduction in usage across the patients in the study.
- Helping sufferers with long-term conditions can help people get back to work and reduce reliance on the state welfare system for support.

## DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INNOVATION

- There are substantial economic benefits for Britain in becoming a world leader in this sector. The global cannabis-based medicine industry is forecast to be worth \$53 billion by 2027.
- Innovative British companies could be at the forefront of this global growth, with a world leading life sciences environment and a legal, Government-regulated framework.
- New investment will fuel economic growth and job creation, bringing high quality new life sciences jobs to rural and deprived areas of the UK, powered by a thriving private sector rather than government subsidy.
- Successful British-made medicines will reduce the current reliance on imported cannabis products, which harm patients through delays, high costs, and variable quality.

## CUTTING CRIME

- A recent YouGov survey found that 1.8 million people currently self-medicate using illegally purchased cannabis, fuelling demand for the illegal drugs trade and its associated social ills.
- Improving access to prescribed cannabis-based medicines will reduce the demand for illegal drugs, reducing crime and freeing up police resources to combat other challenges.

## Contact Details

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For more information on the BPA and our members, please visit: [www.britishphytomedicinesalliance.com](http://www.britishphytomedicinesalliance.com) .

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