UN Takes First Look at Status of Cannabis Under International Law

The international effort to change the classification of cannabis to allow medical use has taken a big step forward. In late July, the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) sent a formal letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), informing him that the WHO’s Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (ECDD) had determined that cannabidiol (CBD) does not need to be scheduled at all.

“The Committee recommended that preparations considered to be pure CBD should not be scheduled within the International Drug

First Southern California Laboratory Achieves PFC Certification

ASA’s Patient Focused Certification (PFC) program last month certified Consumer Safety Analytics (AKA: CannaSafe) Laboratory of Van Nuys, California for laboratory analysis of medical cannabis products. CannaSafe is the first laboratory to be awarded certification in southern California through the PFC program.

“CannaSafe has demonstrated through the PFC certification process a commitment to high standards of testing that will ensure cannabis safety and consumer confidence in California’s burgeoning cannabis market,” said PFC Director Heather Despres. “CannaSafe sets a standard for other laboratories to meet.”

PFC is the only nonprofit, third-party certification program for the medical cannabis industry based on quality standards issued by the American Herbal Products Association (AHP) and the American Herbal Pharmacopoeia (AHP). The AHP and AHP cannabis guidelines offer the most comprehensive regulatory and product safety guidance, as well as Best Business Practices for the production of cannabis and cannabis products. Components of these guidance documents have been included in several states’ regulations.

“Going through the process of PFC certification has brought numerous benefits to our business and our clients as well as their patients and consumers.”

Congressional Pressure Builds for Research

One of the many barriers to medical research on cannabis may soon be gone, if members of Congress have their way. A bipartisan bill to create more access to research cannabis will receive a vote in a key House committee, and Senators are again urging the Department of Justice to stop stalling on the issue.

The House Judiciary Committee is scheduled to vote this month on the Medicinal Cannabis Research Act (H.R. 5634), its author, Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL) told Forbes. The bill, which has 40 bipartisan cosponsors, would require the federal government to issue new cultivation licenses for research purposes.

Access to research materials has been stymied by a lack of supply from the sole authorized source, the federal research farm operated by the National Institute of Drug Abuse. Two years since the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agreed to issue more licenses, none have been issued.

The Department of Justice has effectively blocked the process by refusing to act on any applications sent over from the DEA.

Members of Congress have been applying pressure to the Trump Administration, target-
ASA Activist Profile: Tom Duncan, in memoriam

Tom Duncan, co-founder of Iowans for Safe Access and recipient of ASA’s Courage Award in 2017, passed away on August 15, 2018, after living with cancer for years. He was 60. A humble, tireless advocate for access to medical cannabis for all those in need, Tom worked tirelessly for safe access to medical cannabis on both the state and national levels. He was a generous man who always demurred when complimented on his advocacy, giving credit to the many mothers in Iowa for the wins they achieved. Patients everywhere have lost a great champion. He will be sorely missed.

“Tom’s last victory as an advocate, just days before his death, was to change the University Iowa Hospital and Clinic policy to allow patients to bring in cannabis oil and medicate in their room.

“I was very sad to hear about our movement’s loss of Tom Duncan,” said Steph Sherer, pictured with Tom at the Unity Conference last year. “He was inspiration to all of us at ASA and such a lovely person.”

A resident of Jefferson, Iowa, where he was buried late last month, Tom worked as a commodities broker for several years, as well as with his father on the family farm there.

After his father died in 2008, Tom took on caring for his elderly mother, Bonnie, and his brother Jay, who has Down Syndrome. Tom also worked for a time at Genesis, an organization that provides support for people with disabilities, and was active in Aktion Club, a service club for adults with disabilities.

“If you weren’t his friend, that was by your choice, as he met everyone where they were and respected everyone,” says one of his hometown friends.

His friends remember him for his love of ice cream and his way with children. Advocates will remember how Tom worked tirelessly for safe access to medical cannabis on both the state and national levels. He was a generous man who always demurred when complimented on his advocacy, giving credit to the many mothers in Iowa for the wins they achieved. Patients everywhere have lost a great champion. He will be sorely missed.

ACTION ALERT: Urge Congress to Find the Facts

BuzzFeed News reports the Trump Administration is secretly preparing a smear campaign about cannabis that includes soliciting negative stories and statements about it from federal agencies. Good policy requires honest conversations with lawmakers, and the public is entitled to unbiased studies and information about cannabis.

The Marijuana Data Collection Act (H.R. 6495) can insure that impartial approach. The bill would require the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate information gathering with the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor and the various states. It would also direct the National Academy of Sciences to publish a biannual study on the health, safety and economic effects of state programs.

You can help by urging your Congressional representative to become a cosponsor the Marijuana Data Collection Act today at safeaccessnow.org/findthefacts.

JOIN TODAY!

YES! Please accept my donation
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