

From Plant to Patient: Navigating the Evidence, Risks, and Counseling of Medical Cannabis

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Submission Type Workshop

Topic Addiction- Substance Use Disorders: Identifying, Diagnosing, Treating, and/or Managing

Status Submitted

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SUBMISSION DETAILS

Workshop Summary As medical cannabis use continues to expand across the United States, addiction psychiatrists are increasingly asked to help patients navigate questions about its potential benefits, psychiatric effects, and addiction related risks. Despite how common these conversations have become, formal education on medical cannabis during medical training remains inconsistent across programs. Many clinicians receive little structured guidance on evidence-based indications, psychiatric and cognitive effects, drug interactions, cannabis use disorder, or how to have balanced, patient centered conversations about cannabis use. As a result, clinicians often feel uncertain navigating these nuanced discussions in everyday practice.

The goal of this workshop is to provide addiction psychiatrists with practical, evidence-based guidance for counseling patients who are using or considering medical cannabis. The session will review current evidence surrounding therapeutic applications, psychiatric and cognitive risks, harm reduction approaches, and shared decision-making strategies. The workshop will incorporate skill building exercises, practical training and problem solving through role play activities, and interactive case discussions designed to mirror real world clinical scenarios commonly encountered in addiction and psychiatric practice. Discussion will remain relevant across a broad range of treatment settings and evolving medical cannabis policies throughout the United States.

This workshop is expected to improve clinician confidence and consistency when discussing medical cannabis with patients, particularly those with co-occurring psychiatric and substance use disorders. Participants will leave with a clinically grounded framework for approaching cannabis related conversations while reducing stigma and promoting thoughtful, evidence-based care. More broadly, this session aims to support the growing need for practical medical cannabis education within Addiction Psychiatry training and medical education nationwide.

Workshop Interaction and Engagement Methods Skill-Building Exercises – incorporating tools

such as hands-on training, quizzes, toolkits, worksheets, facilitated small group discussions or breakouts., Practical training and problem solving (Role play/Real play) - Presenters or prepared audience members take on various roles to practice techniques/skills., Case Discussion - Use of cases to engage the audience in brainstorming about diagnosis, treatment planning, clinical issues.

Interactive Plan Description The workshop will mix short teaching segments with interactive discussion focused on real-world cannabis counseling. About 40% of the session will be didactic and 60% will be interactive exercises, role play, and case discussion.

Skill-building exercises will be incorporated throughout the workshop after brief teaching sections on topics like cannabis formulations, psychiatric risks, harm reduction, and counseling strategies. Participants will work through common clinical scenarios and practical counseling approaches they can immediately apply in practice.

Role play and practical problem-solving exercises will take place during the middle of the workshop. Presenters and participants will work through realistic patient conversations involving insomnia, anxiety, chronic pain, recovery concerns, and co-occurring substance use disorders to practice balanced, patient-centered counseling.

Case discussions will be used throughout the second half of the session to encourage audience discussion around diagnosis, treatment planning, and challenging clinical situations commonly encountered in addiction psychiatry.

These activities are designed to keep the workshop practical, conversational, and directly relevant to everyday clinical work.

Writing Educational Learning Objectives

Please list at least three (3) brief learning objectives below.

Learning Objective 1 Describe common medical cannabis formulations and compare routes of administration, onset and duration of effects, and relative product strength and potency considerations.

Learning Objective 2 Identify psychiatric and addiction related risks associated with medical cannabis use, including considerations for patients with co-occurring substance use disorders and serious mental illness.

Learning Objective 3 Demonstrate effective patient counseling skills related to medical cannabis, including discussing potential benefits and risks, contraindications and precautions, and patient specific considerations through case based skills practice.