

# Special Bulletin

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## **Prescribing of Cannabis-derived medicines**

Colleagues in General Practice will likely be aware from the media coverage that the Home Office will amend regulations soon to facilitate the prescribing of cannabis-derived medicines in the UK.

A summary the changes planned are detailed in the press release from the Home Office at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-that-medicinal-cannabis-is-legal>

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that the prescribing of these unlicensed medicines controlled drugs will initially be limited by regulation to doctors on a GMC specialist register – so GPs will not be able to legally prescribe until licensed products are available.

Although the decision to amend the regulations has now been made, the commissioning arrangements for such medicines will need to be finalised, and as they are unlicensed medicines with a limited evidence base, it is to be expected that they will initially only be used for exceptional patients for whom all licensed options have been unsuccessful through an Individual Funding Request process or similar.

The status of Cannabis as a Class B drug will not change and therefore penalties for illicit (non-medicinal) use remain the same.

If you have any queries about the regulatory changes, please contact NHS England via [jon.hayhurst@nhs.net](mailto:jon.hayhurst@nhs.net).