

New Guidelines on Cannabis and Psychosis: Public mental health-oriented recommendations for prevention and clinical practice

Category: Invited Presentation

Abstract Body

Cannabis is one of the most commonly used substances in the world, particularly among adolescents and young adults. In 2022, 27% of Canadians reported having used cannabis in the past 12 months, including 50% of 20-24 year-olds. Cannabis has been linked to both increased risk of developing psychosis and worsening outcomes for those who already have a psychotic disorder. Many existing health interventions for reducing the risks of psychosis focus primarily on cannabis abstinence or use reduction to improve health outcomes. For many cannabis users, abstaining may not be desired or achievable, therefore considering alternative approaches to cannabis consumption that prevents or reduces psychosis risks is pertinent.

The recent publication of the Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines for Psychosis (LRCUG-PSYCH) aims to provide public mental health-oriented recommendations on how to use cannabis in ways that mitigate and reduce these risks. The guidelines are based on a harm reduction approach, empowering individuals to understand the impacts of their cannabis use and make choices about their consumption to help reduce their individual risk of psychotic-related outcomes. The LRCUG-PSYCH serves as a health education, prevention, and harm reduction resource for individuals who are thinking about using cannabis or actively using cannabis as well as clinicians, professionals, organizations, or government entities dedicated to improving the health of people who use cannabis.

The conference presentation will discuss the recommendations and their use in the prevention and in the clinical management of psychosis. In addition, we will share various tools in development that facilitate the use of the guidelines in clinical practice including a clinician dialogue support tool and patient decision aid. These tools aim to shift the dialogue towards greater harm reduction approaches for psychosis care with a focus on “how” to best achieve this in practice.

Learning Objective #1

Discuss cannabis use factors influencing the risk of psychosis

Learning Objective #2

Discuss concerns and tension points around conversations on cannabis use with patients with Psychosis

Reference #1

Fischer B, Hall W, Fidalgo TM, Hoch E, Le Foll B, Medina-Mora ME, Reimer J, Tibbo PG & Jutras-Aswad D, (2023). Recommendations for Reducing the Risk of Cannabis Use-Related

Adverse Psychosis Outcomes: A Public Mental Health-Oriented Evidence Review, *Journal of Dual Diagnosis*, 19:2-3, 71-96, doi: 10.1080/15504263.2023.2226588.

Reference #2

Fischer B, Robinson T, Bullen C, Curran V, Jutras-Aswad D, Medina-Mora ME, Pacula RL, Rehm J, Room R, van den Brink W, Hall W. Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines (LRCUG) for reducing health harms from non-medical cannabis use: A comprehensive evidence and recommendations update. *Int J Drug Policy*. 2022 Jan;99:103381. doi: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2021.103381.

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