

Mercy's Policy on Medical Marijuana

In June 2019, Mercy adopted a policy regarding the use of medical marijuana in Mercy facilities and certification by Mercy providers. Based on a comprehensive evaluation that took into consideration the medical, ethical, legal and scientific evidence available, **Mercy does not permit use of medical marijuana on Mercy premises and does not permit Mercy physicians to provide certification to patients for medical marijuana.**

What it means for patients and providers practicing at Mercy facilities

Under our policy, Mercy and non-Mercy physicians practicing at a Mercy facility may not certify patients for medical marijuana while under their care, and medical marijuana is not allowed on Mercy property. If a patient possesses medical marijuana on Mercy premises, staff will ask the patient to arrange for its immediate removal.

How and why we made this decision

Our goal in developing the policy is to support safe and effective evidence-based care that is in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Mercy recognizes that state laws in Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois and Oklahoma authorize marijuana use by qualifying patients for certain medical conditions, but possession and use are currently prohibited by federal law. Further, we believe medical and scientific research on the therapeutic benefits and risks of cannabis products is insufficient at this time. There are no peer-reviewed studies or evidence-based recommendations demonstrating its effectiveness in treating disease, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved medical marijuana for the treatment of medical conditions.

The position of other health care organizations and physician groups

Mercy's policy is similar to those adopted by the vast majority of other major U.S. health care organizations that do not permit medical marijuana, including Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic and Johns Hopkins Health System. In addition, physician organizations such as the American Medical Association, American College of Physicians and American Academy of Pediatrics do not endorse medical marijuana as part of a treatment regimen. While some health organizations are calling for additional research, they caution that this should not be viewed as an endorsement of medical marijuana or that scientific evidence on the therapeutic use of marijuana meets the current standards for a prescription drug product.