Title: Cannabis Terminology - Best Practices

Purpose: The purpose of this Position Statement is to raise healthcare professional and regulatory awareness regarding the proper terms to use when referring to plants falling within the genus Cannabis.

What is Cannabis?
The word Cannabis refers to members of the plant family Cannabaceae, that are widely recognized in many areas of the world as a genus of medicinal, recreational, and fibrous plants. The plant is an annual herb that is erect, stout and aromatic. It is believed that it originated in Central Asia and is now cultivated worldwide.

Cannabis is associated with several distinctive phytocompounds, including Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and Cannabidiol (CBD). Many systems have been used to categorize and describe cannabis. The American Cannabis Nurses Association supports the use of two most common categorical methods:
- In research, Cannabis is classified by its active cannabinoid ratios. Under this scheme, there are three common types of cannabis within circulation (as of 2022): Type 1 THC-dominant, Type 2 approximately equal THC and CBD ratio, and Type 3 CBD-dominant.
- Colloquial terms for cannabis distinguish differences by THC content only. The term "hemp" contains less than 0.3% THC, and "Adult-Use" or High-THC Cannabis, which has more that 0.3% THC.

Brief History of Cannabis Terms in the United States:
Cannabis was first domesticated in the United States as early as the 1850s where it was used in medicinal pharmacy products to alleviate pain and treat specific illnesses. At the beginning of the 20th century cannabis was widely used in medicinal oral and topical formats. Beginning in 1910, Mexican-American farm workers brought the tradition of inhaling cannabis smoke from cigarettes to the North. Sometime during this time, the Mexican Spanish words *"mariguana" and "marihuana"* become popular when referring to the plant. During the following decades the use of the term "marijhuana" become a xenophobic slang-term, thought to be due to the hyper-focus around labor concerns during the Great Depression, further creating division and prejudice against Mexican-American's. The term marijuana continued to be used by government officials and replaced the commonly used medicinal word, Cannabis. The continued use of "marijuana" within Anti-Drug and Anti-immigration propagating continued the derogatory connotations throughout the 20th century.

Legalization of Cannabis:
Hemp (less than 0.3% THC) is nationally legalized by the 2018 Farm Bill and is often regulated by states through their Agricultural Departments. At the time of this publication, THC-Cannabis is legal through medicinal cannabis programs in thirty-eight states and in "adult use" or "recreational" programs in over twenty ("adult use" and "recreational" referred to 21+ markets, similar to alcohol). It's worth noting that THC-Cannabis is not federally legalized through national legislation for "adult use" or "medicinal" purposes.

Call to Action:
The American Cannabis Nurses Association recommends using the above categorical system when referring to cannabis throughout education, research, and regulatory documents and discussions.

Who's Already Taken Action:
Washington State and Hawaii have both re-named landmark cannabis regulations replacing the use of older terms to current terminology when referring to Cannabis.

Where to get more information please contact the American Cannabis Nurses Association.
ACNA Mission: Advance excellence in cannabis nursing practice through advocacy, collaboration, education, research, and policy development efforts.

American Cannabis Nurses Association (ACNA)
　　　Email: info@cannabisnurses.org
　　　Website: https://www.cannabisnurses.org