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PPH Opinion

Another View: Medical marijuana bad medicine and bad public policy

An editorial calling for federal rescheduling of cannabis was misguided and misinformed.

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In regards to "Our View: While cannabis is illegal, dispensaries will struggle" (Aug. 8), the suggestion that marijuana be reclassified to a lower schedule, like prescription drugs, is misguided and misinformed.

Marijuana is a Schedule I drug, which reflects the facts that it is widely abused, that it has no approved medical use by the Food and Drug Administration, and that it lacks accepted safety for use under medical supervision.

The latest National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows that more than 60 percent of all Americans age 12 and older classified with illicit drug dependence or abuse in the past year were dependent on or abused marijuana. Marijuana remains a significant drug of abuse.

Sound medical practice requires that medicines meet well-established standards to determine that they are safe and effective before they are approved for use by sick patients. This system includes the requirement that medicines be approved by the FDA and be distributed in a closed system to limit abuse and diversion.

Some of the chemicals in marijuana may one day be approved for the treatment of specific disorders at specific doses within the well-established system of drug approval. They could then be dispensed by physicians' prescriptions in the controlled system that has served this country well for a century.

Undermining that system, as "medical marijuana" does, is bad public policy and bad medicine.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert L. DuPont, M.D., of Warren is the president of the Institute for Behavior and Health, founding director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and a former U.S. drug czar.