

AB211. 19. Attitudes of Irish patients with chronic pain towards medicinal cannabis

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Background: Medicinal cannabis use is topical in the media in Ireland. A recent Health Products Regulatory Authority review, however, has recommended against its use for patients with chronic pain. This is despite evidence for its effectiveness in this patient cohort and the inadequate pain management of these patients. The aim of this study was to evaluate the attitudes of Irish patients with chronic pain towards medicinal cannabis.

Methods: After institutional ethics committee approval a 12-item questionnaire (excluding demographics) was randomly assigned to patients attending a chronic pain

clinic. The questionnaire was designed to incorporate patient attitudes on a variety of medicinal cannabis related topics.

Results: A total of 74 adult patients were surveyed; 89.19% agreed that cannabis should be legalised for chronic pain medicinal purposes; 79.73% believed it would have health benefits for them and 75.68% agreed it would be socially acceptable to use cannabis for this purpose; 28.38% perceived cannabis to be addictive while 71.62% would be willing to try it if prescribed by a medical professional.

Conclusions: The study highlights the attitudes of chronic pain patients in Ireland towards medicinal cannabis. It shows their desire to have medical cannabis legalised for chronic pain, that they view it as a reasonable pain management option.

Keywords: Cannabis; chronic pain; patient attitudes

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