

News story: Cannabis-derived medicinal products to be made available on prescription

The Home Secretary decided to reschedule these products after receiving advice from experts during the two-part review he commissioned on June 19. It means that senior clinicians will be able to prescribe the medicines to patients with an exceptional clinical need.

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Medicines and Health products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) will now develop a clear definition of what constitutes a cannabis-derived medicinal product so they can be rescheduled and prescribed. Only products meeting this definition will be rescheduled. Other forms of cannabis will be kept under strict controls and will not be available on prescription.

In the meantime, clinicians will still be able to apply to the independent expert panel on behalf of patients wishing to access these products. The Home Secretary also confirmed today that all licence fees for applications made to the panel will be waived, and no fees will be charged in respect of applications which have already been granted.

The government is clear that today's announcement does not pave the way towards legalising cannabis for recreational use. The penalties for unauthorised supply and possession will remain unchanged.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Recent cases involving sick children made it clear to me that our position on cannabis-related medicinal products was not satisfactory.

That is why we launched a review and set up an expert panel to advise on licence applications in exceptional circumstances.

Following advice from two sets of independent advisers, I have taken the decision to reschedule cannabis-derived medicinal products – meaning they will be available on prescription.

This will help patients with an exceptional clinical need, but is in no way a first step to the legalisation of cannabis for recreational use.

In the first part of the review commissioned by the Home Secretary, the Chief Medical Advisor, Professor Dame Sally Davies, concluded that there is evidence that medicinal cannabis has therapeutic benefits.

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) carried out the second part of the review, considering the appropriate schedule for cannabis-derived medicinal products, based on the balance of harms and public health requirements.

The ACMD recommended that such products meeting a clear definition of what constitutes a cannabis-derived medicinal product should be placed in Schedule 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001. It agreed that there is evidence of medicinal benefits from some of these products in certain circumstances and clinicians in the UK should therefore have the option to prescribe cannabis-derived medicinal products for their patients.

In line with the ACMD's recommendations, DHSC and the Home Office will develop additional frameworks and clinical guidelines to ensure that cannabis-derived medicinal products can be prescribed safely to patients but cannot be traded illicitly.

[News story: New dental care approach to be expanded after trial reduces tooth decay](#)

Up to 50 practices in England will be selected to join the 73 currently testing a new approach to dental care.

The new system incentivises dentists to offer full oral health assessments and self-care plans on top of traditional treatments.

In the first year of piloting the new approach, dentists reported that:

- 90% of patients had reduced or maintained levels of tooth decay
- 80% of patients had reduced or maintained levels of gum disease
- 97% of patients said they were satisfied with the dental care they received

The recently published [evaluation report](#) from the first year of testing recommended that a further group of dental practices should be recruited into the programme.

The new practices are currently being selected and will join from October 2018 and January 2019.

The existing 73 practices are continuing to test the new approach, with a new remuneration system added which supports dentists carrying out preventative work.

The scheme could be rolled out nationally from April 2020 if it can be shown to benefit patients, the NHS and dental practice following a thorough evaluation.

Health Minister Steve Brine said:

The government has made great progress in improving the oral health of patients and tooth decay among children continues to decrease – but there is more we can do.

Our new proposed NHS dental contract focuses on prevention and quality of care and will be thoroughly tested to ensure it is financially sustainable for the NHS, patients and dentists.

Chief Dental Officer Sarah Hurley said:

The announcement of up to 50 more prototype practices is an important step in developing the NHS dental service in this its 70th year.

I welcome it and hope that further refinement and testing with the profession will lead us to a model that enables dentists and their teams to play their full part in the delivery of integrated care and further improvement of oral and general health.

[News story: Total Eclipse of the Moon on 27 July 2018](#)

A total eclipse of the Moon will occur on Friday 27 July 2018. This lunar eclipse exhibits the longest duration of totality at 103.6 minutes in the 21st century. It will be visible in its entirety from the Indian Ocean region, westernmost China, India, the Middle East, central Asia, Turkey and the eastern half of Africa. Most of Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia, most of China, western Africa and most of Europe will see the total phase of the eclipse.

Some of the total phase of the eclipse is visible from the United Kingdom as the Moon rises during the umbral ([the Moon's dark inner shadow](#)) part of the eclipse. The Moon will rise in a totally-eclipsed state and we will see about three quarters of the total phase of the eclipse.

The Moon will rise at different times across the United Kingdom. For example, the Moon rises at 20:42 BST in Dover and at 21:43 BST in Portree on the Isle

of Skye. This should help identify the approximate times of Moon rise in the UK for Friday 27 July 2018. Also, specific moon rise times for your location can be calculated using our dynamical astronomical data service, [Websurf 2.0](#) or using our beta Android app, [Sky High](#).

Further details of the eclipse can be found on [HMNAO's Eclipses Online web pages](#)

Press release: Coventry hit-and-run killer has sentence increased after Solicitor General's referral

A man who killed 2 young boys due to driving while intoxicated has today had his sentence increased after the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP, referred his sentence to the Court of Appeal for being too low.

Robert Anthony Brown, 54, was driving at twice the speed limit while under the influence of cocaine when he collided with the Platt-May family who were crossing the road. Two young brothers, aged 6 and 2, were killed by the impact.

Brown has an extensive history of previous motoring-related offences, and at the time of this offence was disqualified from driving, unlicensed, and uninsured.

Brown was originally sentenced at Warwick Crown Court in April to 9 years' imprisonment and disqualified from driving for 15 years. Today, after the Solicitor General's referral, the Court of Appeal increased his sentence to 10 years 6 months' imprisonment.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General said:

This was an atrocious offence, which Corey and Casper's family will likely never recover from. Brown had an overwhelming history of similar offences, and he deserved to be jailed for longer. This is such a tragic case, and I hope the increased sentence sends a clear message that anyone who commits such a crime will be met with the full force of the law.

[Press release: UK supports US declaration condemning the illegal annexation of Crimea](#)

Foreign Office spokesperson said:

The UK echoes the United States' firm statement of opposition to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. The UK position is clear: we condemn Russia's continued breach of international law; Crimea is Ukrainian territory. We remain fully committed to upholding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

The UK also remains deeply concerned by the human rights situation in Crimea, where we have seen the systematic persecution of minority groups and of those who voice their opposition to Russia's illegal annexation of the territory. We call again for Russia to release all Ukrainian political prisoners held in Crimea and in Russia, and to allow unrestrained access for international human rights monitoring bodies to the peninsula.

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