Factors Related to Drug-Impaired Driving: A Canadian public safety perspective

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Background to legalization
On October 17, 2018 Canada legalized the recreational use of cannabis nationwide.

The *Cannabis Act* aims to accomplish 3 goals:
- keep cannabis out of the hands of youth;
- keep profits out of the pockets of criminals; and
- protect public health and safety by allowing adults access to legal cannabis.
The **Cannabis Act** amends the **Criminal Code** to:
- Strengthen the response to drug-impaired driving; and
- Repeal transportation provisions.

• Closed package and out of reach.
• QB and SK have zero tolerance.
• Others have zero tolerance for youth, new, or commercial drivers.
2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey

- Administered between March and May 2017.
- 9,215 respondents aged 16 and older nationwide participated.
  - Most respondents identified as a man and between 25 and 34 years of age.
- Cannabis use for medical and non-medical purposes.
Canadian Cannabis Survey- Overall results
Use, methods and sources of cannabis

- Less than one-quarter of survey respondents indicated having used cannabis in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Most common method of cannabis consumption was through smoking.
- The most frequent sources of cannabis were from a family member or friend, sharing amongst friends, acquaintances and a dealer or storefront dispensary.
Demographic profile

- Just over one-quarter of males reported past 12-month use of cannabis compared with 18% of females.

- Respondents between 16-24 were twice as likely to report cannabis use in the past year
  - 16 to 24 years of age- 43%
  - 25 years and older- 18%

- Age of initiating cannabis use was 18.7 years
  - Earlier age of cannabis initiation affects the quantity of cannabis consumed
Post legalization behaviours

- Among Canadians who have not used cannabis in their lifetime, 4% indicated they intend to use it for non-medical purposes once it is legalized.

- Among those who have used in their lifetime for non medical purposes:
  - 68% indicated they will use the same amount once cannabis is legalized;
  - 13% said they will use more; and
  - 19% indicated they will use less.
Drug-Impaired Driving

Beliefs about drug-impaired driving
Beliefs about drug-impaired driving

- Majority of respondents believe that non-medical cannabis impairs driving.
- Women, more than men, believe this - 85% compared with 80%.

Source: 2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey
Beliefs about the impacts of non-medical cannabis on driving by age category

Source: 2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey

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2019 North American Cannabis Summit
Beliefs about drug-impaired driving

- Less than one-third of frequent users of cannabis believe that non-medical cannabis impairs driving.
  - Infrequent users most often believe that cannabis impairs driving, followed by occasional users.

- Frequent users of cannabis also believe that it is safe to drive immediately after using non-medical cannabis.
Drug-Impaired Driving

Drug-impaired driving results
Behaviours related to drug-impaired driving

- Approximately 2 out of 5 respondents reported having driven within 2 hours of using cannabis:
  - 40% within the last 30 days;
  - 28% within the last 12 months.

- Significant differences noted for gender:
  - 45% of men and 31% of women indicated they had driven a motor vehicle within 2 hours of using non-medical cannabis.
Beliefs about the impacts of non-medical cannabis on driving by those having driven within 2 hours of using cannabis

Source: 2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey
Driving within 2 hours of using non-medical cannabis by age category

Source: 2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey
Driving within 2 hours of using non-medical cannabis by type of user

Source: 2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey
Driving within 2 hours of using cannabis and alcohol

- Overall, 15% reported driving within 2 hours of using cannabis and alcohol.
- Infrequent users of cannabis reported having driven within 2 hours of using cannabis and alcohol more often than either occasional or frequent users.
Driving within 2 hours of using cannabis and another drug

- Overall, 8% reported driving within 2 hours of using cannabis and another drug.

- Men more than women indicated they had driven within 2 hours of using non-medical cannabis with another drug.
Drug-Impaired Driving

Passenger in a vehicle
Passengers in a motor vehicle

- Approximately 2 out of 5 Canadians reported having been a passenger in a vehicle driven by someone who used non-medical cannabis within 2 hours.

- Men more often report being a passenger with someone who used cannabis.
Passenger in a vehicle driven by someone who used non-medical cannabis within 2 hours by age category

Source: 2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey
Passenger in a vehicle driven by someone who used non-medical cannabis within 2 hours by type of user

- Frequent user: 39%
- Occasional user: 34%
- Infrequent user: 27%

Source: 2017 Canadian Cannabis Survey
Next Steps
Importance of this research

- Understanding the changes in perceptions and behaviours of people who use cannabis before and after legalization is important:
  - Benchmark data;
  - Develop public safety policy and program initiatives;
  - Police preparedness;
  - Focused public awareness campaigns.
Moving Forward

- Measuring impairment
  - What is impairment?

- Self-reported behaviours
  - Improvements to current questions on driving after use

- Monitoring trends
  - Provincial and Federal changes
Ongoing Work

- **Evidence-based research** underway:
  - Cybercrime facilitated cannabis markets;
  - Analysis of sentiments towards cannabis;
  - 2018 CCS analyses and development of the 2019 CCS;
  - National Cannabis Survey.

- **Awareness and Education**
  - Don’t Drive High campaign began in November 2017.
Thank you!

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Key Sources

- 2018 Canadian Cannabis Survey

- Cannabis statistics
  https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181017/dq181017c-eng.htm

- National Cannabis Survey
  https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181011/dq181011b-eng.htm

- StatsCannabis
  https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181004/dq181004a-eng.htm

- Estimating the demand for cannabis
  https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/180921/dq180921d-eng.htm

- Using municipal wastewater to measure Canadians' consumption of cannabis and opioids
  https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/180222/dq180222e-eng.htm