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DEA's Internal Review Results In Removal Of Cannabis Misinformation

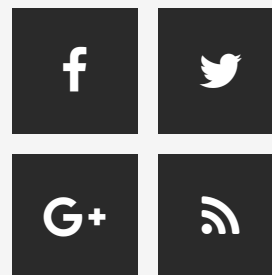
February 9, 2018, 10:00 am Johnny Green Medical Marijuana



(image via Wikipedia)

In a letter dated January 26th, Americans for Safe Access (ASA), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring safe and legal access to medical cannabis for therapeutic use and research, learned that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) denied their Information Quality Act (IQA) petition requesting the correction of misinformation disseminated on the DEA website on the health effects of medical cannabis, originally filed more than a year ago. However, the letter also pointed out that, through a "regular review process," the DEA had removed certain documents and updated much of the information on the DEA website that ASA's IQA petition addressed.

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By Robert Bergman

The IQA petition process is a mechanism designed to ensure the “quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information” presented by the Government. For years, the DEA published scientifically incomplete and inaccurate information about the health effects of medical cannabis, which directly influenced the action —and inaction— of Congress. ASA noted that the DEA directly contradicted much of this misinformation in recent public statements, and used the DEA’s own words confirming scientific facts about medical cannabis in the IQA petition to ask it to change or take down the incorrect information. ASA strongly asserted that the information called for correction so that Congress could have access to the appropriate tools to make informed decisions about public health.

Elected officials rely on the DEA to provide fact-based information about medical cannabis to inform policy making decisions, such as whether or not to support the **CJS Medical Marijuana Amendment**, or the CARERS Act of 2017 (**S.1764** and **H.R. 2920**). The DEA’s removal of this inaccurate information is a significant success because it means that politicians can no longer use the misinformation about the gateway drug hypothesis and cannabis causing irreversible cognitive decline in adults, psychosis, or lung cancer as a basis for their lack of support on medical cannabis policy. While waiting for a response to the IQA petition, ASA highlighted the public interest by launching an online petition calling on the DEA to correct the misinformation. Shortly after ASA’s petition reached over 100,000 signatures, the DEA removed the document “Dangers and Consequences of Marijuana,” which contained 23 of the 25 factual inaccuracies that ASA pointed out in their petition, from their website. Through their “regular review process”, in January 2017, they also made several updates to the document “Drugs of Abuse,” which included the other two inaccuracies.

“Medical cannabis advocates have consistently fought for the opportunity to debate medical policy based on facts. For the last two decades, everyone from politicians to medical professionals have cited the mistruths from the DEA as a reason to keep medical cannabis from patients,” said Steph Sherer, Executive Director of ASA. “This is a giant win for medical cannabis patients, advocates and political allies. We can only hope that Attorney General Sessions is paying attention to the DEA’s “regular review process” findings.”

“At the end of the day, it does not matter why the DEA decided to update their materials. The key is that this influential organization that Congress relies on to make policy decisions is no longer disseminating mistruths about the gateway theory, and cannabis’ influence on psychosis,



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cognitive decline, and long term brain damage,” stated Mark Wine, a Southern California based partner in the international law firm Orrick, whose team filed the petition for ASA. “We will continue to work with patient advocates to make sure their voices are heard and that only scientifically accurate information is made available to those that are making political decisions.”

Source: [Americans for Safe Access](#)

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About Johnny Green

Johnny Green is a cannabis activist from Oregon. Johnny has a bachelor's degree in public policy, and believes that the message should always be more important than the messenger. #LegalizeIt #FreeThePlant



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