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### ACP recognizes benefits of medical marijuana.

Image from public domain. In a recent position paper, the American College of Physicians recognized real benefits of medical marijuana, called for continuing research, and acknowledged the importance of rescheduling marijuana from its Schedule I status. The report's executive summary states: "Marijuana has been smoked for its medicinal properties for centuries. Preclinical, clinical, and anecdotal reports suggest numerous potential medical uses for marijuana. Although the indications for some conditions (e.g., HIV wasting and chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting) have been well documented, less information is available about other potential medical uses. Additional research is needed to clarify marijuana's therapeutic properties and determine standard and optimal doses and routes of delivery. Unfortunately, research expansion has been hindered by a complicated federal approval process, limited availability of research-grade marijuana, and the debate over legalization. Marijuana's categorization as a Schedule I controlled substance raises significant concerns for researchers, physicians, and patients. As such, the College's policy positions on marijuana as medicine are as follows: "Position 1: ACP supports programs and funding for rigorous scientific evaluation of the potential therapeutic benefits of medical marijuana and the publication of such findings." Position 1a: ACP supports increased research for conditions where the efficacy of marijuana has been established to determine optimal dosage and route of delivery. "Position 1b: Medical marijuana research should not only focus on determining drug efficacy and safety but also on determining efficacy in comparison with other available treatments." Position 2: ACP encourages the use of non-smoked forms of THC that have proven therapeutic value." Position 3: ACP supports the current process for obtaining federal research-grade cannabis." Position 4: ACP urges review of marijuana's status as a schedule I controlled substance and its reclassification into a more appropriate schedule, given the scientific evidence regarding marijuana's safety and efficacy in some clinical conditions." Position 5: ACP strongly supports exemption from federal criminal prosecution; civil liability; or professional sanctioning, such as loss of licensure or credentialing, for physicians who prescribe or dispense medical marijuana in accordance with state law. Similarly, ACP strongly urges protection from criminal or civil penalties for patients whose medical marijuana as permitted under state laws." Thanks to NORML for linking to this ACP report. Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Drugs at 19:00