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Short communication

Global perspectives on medical cannabis products: knowledge, attitudes, clinical use and safety perceptions among healthcare professionals and patients

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Introduction

Medical cannabis and cannabinoid-based medicinal products (CBMPs) have gained increasing scientific and clinical attention due to their therapeutic potential in chronic pain, neurological disorders, oncology, palliative care, and psychiatric conditions. Despite expanding legalization and clinical integration in several countries, substantial variability remains in healthcare professionals' and patients' knowledge, attitudes, prescribing confidence, and perceptions of safety. Evidence suggests that while pharmacists and physicians increasingly acknowledge the potential clinical benefits of medical cannabis, they frequently report insufficient formal education, lack of standardized clinical guidance, and uncertainty regarding appropriate dosing, adverse effects, contraindications, and drug–drug interactions (Bawa et al., 2023; Batinic et al., 2024; Russo et al., 2024). These gaps may directly influence clinical decision-making and patient counseling practices. Therefore, this narrative literature review aimed to systematically synthesize and critically evaluate current evidence regarding knowledge, attitudes, clinical use, and safety perceptions of medical cannabis among healthcare professionals and patients, while identifying key educational, clinical, and regulatory gaps that may affect its safe and effective implementation in modern healthcare systems.

Research Methodology

A narrative literature review was conducted using peer-reviewed studies published between 2023 and 2025. Included articles comprised cross-sectional surveys, qualitative studies, scoping reviews, and international analyses involving healthcare professionals and patients. Data were systematically identified, screened, and synthesized to evaluate knowledge, attitudes, clinical use, and safety perceptions of medical cannabis and cannabinoid-based medicinal products (CBMPs).

Results and Discussion

The reviewed literature demonstrates a consistent global trend toward increasing acceptance of medical cannabis among healthcare professionals and patients, particularly for indications such as chronic pain, neurological disorders, palliative care, oncology-related symptoms, epilepsy, and treatment-resistant conditions (Dassieu et al., 2023; Syed et al., 2025). Across studies, pharmacists and physicians generally recognize the therapeutic potential of cannabinoid-based medicinal products (CBMPs), yet their clinical confidence remains limited due to

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insufficient formal education, lack of standardized curricula, and minimal exposure to cannabinoid pharmacology during professional training (Bawa et al., 2023; Sera & Duncan, 2023; Hareeri et al., 2025). Despite generally positive attitudes, healthcare professionals frequently report uncertainty regarding dosing strategies, pharmacokinetics, product variability, adverse effect profiles, contraindications, and clinically relevant drug–drug interactions, which contributes to cautious, inconsistent, or delayed clinical use (Russo et al., 2024; Zammit et al., 2025). This persistent gap between favorable perceptions and limited clinical confidence is observed across different professional groups, including pharmacists, physicians, and healthcare students, and appears to be strongly associated with insufficient regulatory clarity and limited access to evidence-based prescribing guidelines (Batinic et al., 2024; Yusupov et al., 2025). Patient-centered evidence indicates that individuals with chronic conditions often perceive medical cannabis as beneficial for improving symptom control, sleep quality, pain reduction, and overall quality of life. However, concerns remain regarding long-term safety, psychoactive effects, variability in product composition, stigma, and accessibility barriers within healthcare systems (Dassieu et al., 2023). Furthermore, international comparisons reveal substantial heterogeneity in knowledge levels, prescribing practices, and regulatory familiarity, largely influenced by national legislation, cultural perceptions, and differences in medical education frameworks (Syed et al., 2025). Overall, the findings highlight an urgent need for structured interdisciplinary education, harmonized clinical guidelines, and strengthened pharmacovigilance systems to ensure safe, consistent, and evidence-based integration of medical cannabis into clinical practice.

Conclusion and future perspectives

Current evidence indicates increasing acceptance of medical cannabis and cannabinoid-based medicinal products (CBMPs); however, persistent educational, clinical, and regulatory limitations continue to impede their safe, evidence-based implementation. Future priorities should focus on standardized interdisciplinary education, harmonized prescribing frameworks, strengthened pharmacovigilance, and rigorous clinical research to enhance prescribing competence, therapeutic safety, and patient outcomes while reducing clinical uncertainty in cannabinoid-based therapy.

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