

The Compassionate Voice

Newsletter of the BCCCS



July/August/September 2012

15 Glorious Years!



Photos - BCCCS staff, members and allies at the Smokin' Speakeasy Soiree: a Night of Prohibited Play.

The BCCCS would like to thank everyone who came out to play and party with us on May 17th, proudly celebrating our shared efforts against prohibition. Tremendous thanks to our staff, board members and volunteers who helped in making this milestone magical. The evening will be remembered, and nobody can argue that we didn't turn 15 years old in style with just the right amount of class.

182 people came through the doors of the Chapel Arts to fill the bedazzling space with much action at the blackjack and roulette tables all night long. For those that didn't fancy gambling away their chips, the stage of wonderment, starting off with the talented Burlesque Beauties and Travis the Magician, offered fine illusory entertainment. As the night went on, Company B Jazz Band and Maria in the Shower both played energetic sets that got most everyone dancing. Thanks also to our make-up artists and Patrick for setting up beautiful photos in the dreamy garage space, and to Kimi for telling many fortunes beyond prohibition.

Here's to hoping that the fight to claim our choice medicine doesn't take another 15 years.



Schizophrenia and Cannabis Use

Research from the Universities of Hamburg and Cologne, Germany shows that patients with schizophrenia that use cannabis have a higher density of grey matter in the brain than patients that do not take cannabis. 30 first episode patients who were cannabis users were compared to 24 patients with no cannabis use. Cannabis users presented also with less severe cognitive impairment. The results were published in *Schizophrenia Research Journal*.

Another combined study between researchers in Mannheim, Cologne, California and Genova found that cannabis compound cannabidiol (CBD) alleviates psychotic symptoms of schizophrenia. Cannabidiol was compared with amisulpride, which is a potent anti-psychotic.

The double-blind randomized clinical trial showed that either treatment was safe and led to clinical improvement, but also that cannabidiol had fewer side effects. The results, published in *Translational Psychiatry*, led to the conclusion that CBD could be a new mechanism in schizophrenia treatment.



Smoked Cannabis For Multiple Sclerosis and Fibromyalgia

A clinical study of MS patients at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine showed that smoked cannabis can be effective treatment for spasticity. The research also resulted in reduced perception of pain, but also increased fatigue. Published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, the study was a placebo-controlled trial involving 30 patients.

A separate study by the American College of Rheumatology looked at the prevalence of cannabinoid use among 457 fibromyalgia patients. The results showed that 13% of those patients used cannabis: 80% in herbal form and 24% in prescription form, as well as 3% in either form. The research was published in *Arthritis Care & Research*.



Report: Dispensaries Not Linked to Neighbourhood Crime

A University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) study looked at crime rates in 95 areas of Sacramento during 2009, when dispensaries were given regulations regarding setup locations.

Published in the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, the research shows that neighbourhoods containing medical cannabis dispensaries are no more likely to have crime than other neighbourhoods.

This study may debunk a 2009 California Police Chiefs Association report saying that dispensaries are tied to organized crime.

Cannabis Use Among Adolescents

Research from the University of Wollongong, Australia, looked at the axonal fibre connectivity of the brain of 59 cannabis users with histories of heavy use.

Published in neurology journal *Brain*, the study concluded that "findings indicate long-term cannabis use is hazardous to the white matter of the developing brain. Delaying the age at which regular use begins may minimize the severity of microstructural impairment."

AGM Report

The 13th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the BC Compassion Club Society took place on 6 May 2012 on the dispensary side of the club.

Registration began at noon, with the actual meeting starting at 1pm and going till around 4pm.

The meeting began with a beautiful territorial welcoming ceremony by BCCCS staff Beric Dean, followed by introductions and regular AGM business.

Around 25 members attended, excluding those who voted by sending in a proxy to attend on their behalf.

The BCCCS would like to thank all members and staff that attended, including a special shout-out to the AGM Committee and Lisa who pulled the event together.

A big thanks also to all staff that helped set up and take down the space, as well as Emily Rose and Elsa for putting together a delicious and cost-effective spread of food for everyone who attended.



Consultations on Medical Cannabis Dispensary Regulation

On the 28 and 29th June the Canadian Association of Medical Cannabis Dispensaries (CAMCD), of which the BCCCS is a founding member, held consultation meetings with community stakeholders, policy-makers and dispensaries on the self-regulation of community-based medical cannabis access.

Representatives from the province's 30+ dispensaries gathered to look at CAMCD's standards and certification program, which is an initiative set forward to help self-regulate compassion clubs. With new clubs opening every month across the country, CAMCD's standards are meant to bring together best practices for the safe and affordable dispensing of cannabis as decided by industry leaders.

The project is a collaboration between CAMCD, Canadians for Safe Access and University of British Columbia researchers, and funded by the Peter Wall Solutions Initiative (a program focusing on practical and innovative solutions to societal problems).

"Surveys suggest that dispensaries are an integral part of safe access to medical cannabis for critically and chronically ill Canadians" said Philippe Lucas, who represents Canadians for Safe Access (CSA) as a co-investigator on this project. "A well-developed certification program will increase transparency and accountability to this rapidly growing patient group and support safe access to medical cannabis in Canada."

The meetings were separate of Health Canada's ongoing consultations regarding changing the MMAR/MMAP.

Feedback?

We'd love to hear from you about your thoughts on the newsletter. We've already had some excellent feedback to have the newsletter in colour and add some style. Email communications@thecompassionclub.org.

Rooftop Fundraiser

July 28 @ 7pm

Help send Minh Home

Allanah J Stew, Yarddancer, The Indigo Kids, Fireworks, Cocktails, 50/50 draw

More info & tickets at Front Desk

Staff Changes

The BCCCS would like to extend a warm welcome to a host of new staff that have joined the Distribution department - Setareh, Cecily, Junie and Beric Dean.

Look forward to seeing these staffers often in the lanes over the next few months.



Supplement Profile: Folic Acid

Folic acid is known as brain food and is needed for energy production and in the formation of red blood cells.

Otherwise known as vitamin B9, it is abundant in fresh foods and vegetables.

If your diet does not provide enough folic acid you may need to supplement it, particularly if you are experiencing the following symptoms of deficiency: anemia, fatigue, insomnia, memory problems, weakness and restless leg syndrome.

Folic acid supplementation is also important before conceiving a child and during the pregnancy to reduce the chances of neural tube defects. In the case of anemia, it is important to have blood tests done to ensure that it is a folic acid anemia, rather than an iron or B12 deficiency anemia.

It is important not to take high doses of folic acid for extended periods if you have a hormone-related cancer or seizure disorder.

For the months of July and August our Thorne 5-MTHF (a highly bio-available form of folic acid) will be on sale for 10% off.

Member R&Rs Spotlight: Compassion and Respect

As part of our member education process past New Membering, we're outlining the Member's Rights and Responsibilities document that members sign during their orientation sessions, so that you know the guidelines of the BCCCS better.

The Core Rights and Responsibilities section mentions "Compassion and Respect:

You have the right to be treated with compassion, courtesy, dignity and respect. You have a responsibility to treat others with compassion, courtesy, dignity and respect.

You have a right to be treated in a manner that recognizes your individuality and promotes personal autonomy and you have a responsibility to behave in a manner which recognizes others' individuality and personal autonomy."

These core values have to do with the way in which members treat one another as well as staff, and vice versa. This means creating and sustaining a space that is respectful of people and their race, gender, orientation and abilities.

If ever you would like to take a closer look at your R&Rs, feel free to ask Front Desk for a copy.

