

Health policy on marijuana use argumentative essay

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Statement of Issue

The state of Colorado recently legalized the use of Marijuana for recreational purposes. This came after the adoption of Article XVII, Section 16 of the Constitution of Colorado (Amendment 64) that legalized the use, distribution and taxation of marijuana. Consequently, the rates of marijuana use in the state has risen considerably. One of the classes of citizens who are mostly affected by the use of marijuana is pregnant mothers. The Marijuana Enforcement Division of Colorado is responsible for developing and enacting rules, which are supposed to govern both the medical and retail marijuana industries in the state of Colorado. In regards to recreational marijuana, which is classified under the retail category, the division has enacted one major rule, which stipulates that warning labels should be attached to all marijuana retail products. One of the labels that stand out is the one that warns pregnant mothers about the usage of marijuana. This label states, "There may be additional health risks associated with the consumption of this product for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning on becoming pregnant". This label is very vague and in most cases is unclear to many. Mothers are not even aware of the mentioned risks that are associated with the usage of marijuana. For the label to be more effective, several effective approaches must be taken to ensure that the harmful effects of marijuana especially in regards to mothers are clear and understandable.

Policy Options

- A requirement for every marijuana retail product to come with a warning label indicating all the implications of Marijuana use on the developing fetus inside the mother's body

Strength- Mothers will be exposed or made aware of the risks that they are exposing their children to and will therefore think twice about using marijuana when they are pregnant.

Weakness- Failure to read the label by pregnant mothers, ignorance of the expounded label in spite of its clarity, reduced sales of marijuana will have a negative effect on the economy of the state

Supporter- This policy is bound to garner support from child activists as well as pregnant mothers who may want to be fully aware of the effect that marijuana use has on their developing fetus

- Development of distinct labels for different classes of mothers

The classes include pregnant mothers, future mothers, and breastfeeding mothers and so on. Each mother who goes to a marijuana retailer should buy a product that comes with a label stating the effects on children, for instance, the pregnant mother will be told of effects on the fetus, a breastfeeding mother will be told of the effects of the drug on the child being breastfed.

Strength- Increased levels of accountability when it comes to marijuana usage, increased levels of understanding of the consequences of marijuana usage

Weakness- More difficult and costly to implement, Retailers may hand out wrong classifications to wrong buyers

Supporters- Pregnant mothers, breastfeeding mothers, potential mothers

Main Recommendations

Policy Number one is recommended for enactment. As shown earlier, the rate of marijuana usage has been on the rise in the state of Colorado.

Increased negative effects of marijuana on the entire population are consequently bound to increase. At the core of those affected are pregnant mothers. Many mothers in the state are not aware of the serious implications of marijuana not only on their own health, but more importantly, on the health of their developing fetus. In fact, many rejoiced when Article XVII, Section 16 of the Constitution of Colorado (Amendment 64) was adopted to allow the use of medical marijuana. Many continue using the drug without realizing that they are putting the lives of their fetus in danger. Many in fact assume that if the drug is to have any effects, it will be on their own bodies and not on the fetus.

This is why Policy Number 1 must be enacted with immediate effect. Retail products of marijuana should come with clearly labeled warnings that note down the dangerous effects of marijuana on the developing fetus. The label should be marked in a bold color and should be underlined so that it is clear and conspicuous for every marijuana user. A warning label is “ **MARIJUANA USE IS DANGEROUS TO A DEVELOPING FOETUS IN THE MOTHER’S WOMB**”. The proven risks of marijuana use should then be listed in a numerical manner without leaving any out.

Conclusion

I urge the Colorado State Congress to adopt this policy with immediate effect and oversee its implementation. The state is a very critical state seeing that it has just legalized the use of recreational marijuana. It cannot be denied that marijuana has detrimental effects on all citizens. It is also understood that the state would not like to infringe on the rights of citizens in regards to the use of marijuana and this is why the rights of the defenseless such as the unborn must be protected. Although the putting of a warning label on a marijuana product may not necessarily prevent a mother from purchasing the product, it will however make the mother aware of the risk that she is exposing her fetus and this is definitely a huge stride forward.

References

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