



## Experts Weigh In On Medical Cannabis Products Now Available In The UK

Javier Hasse and Alex Oleinic , Benzinga Contributor

November 02, 2018



The global cannabis industry took two big steps forward this week.

On Oct. 31, Mexico's Supreme Court said the laws that ban recreational weed are unconstitutional, essentially opening the door for a potential legalization of pot in the future.

The second major development took place across the pond. The UK government rescheduled certain cannabis-based products for medicinal use. This allows medical professionals to prescribe products containing cannabis if they consider that patients would benefit from it.

### **It's Not Legalization...Yet**

Under the new guidance, general practitioners aren't allowed to prescribe cannabis products, but they can refer patients to specialists that will be able to issue a prescription under the National Health System.

The change is significant because previously, marijuana and all products containing it were considered illegal drugs and access to cannabis-based treatments was available through a special license from the Home Office issued the Home Secretary.

Cannabis products can only be prescribed in a small number of cases such as nausea from chemotherapy, muscle stiffness caused by multiple sclerosis and to children with rare or severe forms of epilepsy.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration earlier this year approved the first cannabis-based drug in history, Epidiolex, which was developed by UK-based **GW Pharmaceuticals plc** GWPH 1.11%. Epidiolex is designed for seizures associated with rare forms of epilepsy in children.

### **Why It's Important**

The legalization of certain cannabis products for certain conditions is important for the UK health system, because it means the UK government has changed its attitude towards marijuana and has recognized its medical benefits.

It also creates more opportunities for companies to get more involved in marijuana and further study its benefits and develop new cannabis-based treatments for other issues.

“Having U.K. patients being able to better access medicinal cannabis is a huge step forward, and a very encouraging sign for a company like Katexco,” said Dr. Jonathan Rothbard, CEO and Chief Science Officer of **Katexco**, a newly-formed biotech experimenting with CBD to develop anti-inflammatories.

“One of the main motives for the UK’s shift in cannabis policy is that prescribing medical cannabis would allow for safer regulation and generate tax revenue,” said Jessica Billingsley, CEO and Co-Founder of MJ Freeway, leading seed-to-sale technology provider and developer. “As a global technology cannabis company, this could be a great step forward in allowing us to tap into one of the world’s most prominent governments and economies to help with compliance and tracking.”

Michael Klein, CEO of cannabisMD, said “Through steps like this, the medical community will continue to gather important data points and build a holistic view of cannabis as it relates to health and wellness.”

<https://www.benzinga.com/markets/cannabis/18/11/12624253/experts-weigh-in-on-medical-cannabis-products-now-available-in-the-u>