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Ottawa Public Health's Overview of Bill 174 the Cannabis, Smoke-Free Ontario and Road Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017

1. Distribution & retail sale

- The Ontario Cannabis Retail Corporation, a subsidiary overseen by the LCBO, will have exclusive rights to sell cannabis in Ontario.
- The Corporation must comply to the following regulations:
 - Forthcoming federal packaging and labelling regulations;
 - Restricted advertising and display;
 - Require behind-the-counter retail and service with no self-service;
 - Only sell cannabis produced by a federally licensed producer for commercial purposes;
 - Mandatory staff training.
- Forty (40) stand-alone retail stores by July 2018, 80 by July 2019, and approximately 150 by 2020.
- Online distribution will be available to service all regions of Ontario by July 2018.

2. Minimum legal age

- Minimum legal age of 19 years old to purchase, possess, cultivate and consume cannabis.
- Possession for those under 19 years old is prohibited. The province's approach for minors in possession will focus on harm reduction by allowing for diversion from the justice system into approved education and prevention programs. Referral to an approved youth education or prevention program will be based on police officer discretion or may be a condition of probation if convicted.

Personal possession & cultivation

- Align with the federal personal possession limit of 30 grams/person and home cultivation limit of four (4) plants/household for those over 19 years of age.

3. Public consumption

- Prohibit consumption of cannabis in public places, workplaces and motor vehicles. Cannabis use will only be permitted in a private residence.

4. Medical cannabis

- The new *Smoke Free Ontario Act* (SFOA), prohibits the smoking or vaping of medical cannabis in enclosed workplaces, enclosed public places, motor vehicles, or other enclosed places in the same way as tobacco and e-cigarettes.
- Exceptions for medical cannabis use include: in a controlled room in residential care facilities, designated psychiatric facilities, designated veterans' facilities, scientific research and testing facilities, designated guest rooms in hotels, motels and inns, and in residential hospices. There are no provisions for municipalities to allow “compassion clubs”.
- Amendments to the *Education Act* will exempt possession of cannabis for medical purposes and being under the influence of medical cannabis as reason for school suspension.

5. Enforcement

- Establish new regulations to support eliminating illegal dispensaries, including allowing provincial offense officers to carry the same powers as police officers, except for arrest powers.
- Establish strict and escalating provincial offenses for contravening the *Cannabis Act*.
- Create a zero tolerance approach prohibiting commercial drivers, young drivers (under 22) and novice drivers from having the presence of either alcohol and/or drugs in their system.
- Enhance existing penalties by introducing escalating monetary penalties that would apply to all impaired driving sanctions (alcohol and/or drugs).