

The New Terminology of the Medical Cannabis Industry

The recent emergence and growth of the medical cannabis industry has spawned new terminology that more accurately describes the social changes that are happening. Below is an ever-evolving list of some of the new words, and their definitions.

Cannabis – a genus of flowering plants that include Cannabis sativa and Cannabis indica

Caregiver - a person who grows medical cannabis for a patient(s)

Collective – a group of 2 or more medical cannabis patients pooling their resources to grow or distribute cannabis products

Dispensary – medical cannabis dispensing collective
Incorrect term: pot club, pot clinic, marijuana club, etc.

Healing Center – a dispensary that also provides other alternative health resources

Marijuana – derived from the Mexican word “marihuana,” a term coined in the late 1930’s to create hysteria and fear, with the intent of passing legislation to outlaw the cultivation of both cannabis and hemp. Now used to describe cannabis that is illegally produced and sold.

Medical Cannabis – the term used to describe legally dispensed cannabis.
Incorrect term: marijuana or pot

Medicine – medical cannabis and its by products

Not for Profit Dispensary – a dispensary operating by the rules of a nonprofit Corporation, Because of Federal laws still on the books, dispensaries cannot qualify for 501c3 state. Federally recognized nonprofits.

Patients – people who possess a physician’s recommendation for medical cannabis
And are members of a collective

Prop 215 – The Compassionate Use Act passed by California voters in 1996

Recommendation – an authorization written by a licensed physician recommending the use of medical cannabis. Incorrect term: prescription or pot card

SB 420 – bill passed by the California State Legislature that clarified the scope and Application of Prop 215

Wellness Center – descriptive term used by some dispensaries. Additional health Services may, or may not, be offered.

Medical Cannabis Associations

ASA - Americans for Safe Access

CAMCP - Californians for the Advancement of Medical Cannabis Policy

DPA - Drug Policy Alliance

LEAP - Law Enforcement Against Prohibition

MCSC - Medical Cannabis Safety Council

MPP - Marijuana Policy Project

NORML - National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

SSDP - Students for Sensible Drug Policy

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