



Releaf<sup>®</sup>

# 7 Years Legal

A Survey of Active Patients  
of Medical Cannabis in the UK  
2025

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## Executive Summary

November 1st, 2025, marks 7 years since the legalisation on medical cannabis in the United Kingdom. This comprehensive survey of 1,669 active medical cannabis patients represents the largest study of prescribed medical cannabis users in the UK to date. The findings reveal a patient population experiencing transformative benefits from their treatment, while also highlighting persistent challenges around stigma, public confidence, and legal awareness that continue to impact the medical cannabis community.

### Key Highlights:

78% of patients report treatment as “extremely effective” or “very effective” in managing their primary condition symptoms

Over 80% of patients have not encountered stigma since becoming medical cannabis patients

Nearly three-quarters of patients (71.6%) carry their Medical Cannabis Card at all times, demonstrating the importance of legitimacy and legal protection

Chronic pain (47.5%) and mental health conditions (31.4%) represent the overwhelming majority of treated conditions

60% of patients report improved perception of cannabis following their prescription experience



# Contents

## Methodology

This landmark research was conducted through an online survey of active Releaf patients, resulting in 1,669 completed responses across 65 questions. The survey captured insights across multiple dimensions including:

- Demographic information and patient tenure
- Condition types and treatment effectiveness
- Quality of life impacts
- Stigma and social perceptions
- Driving awareness and confidence
- Medical Cannabis Card usage
- Public confidence and legal knowledge
- Travel experiences

The representative sample provides crucial insights into the lived experiences of UK medical cannabis patients and identifies both successes and ongoing challenges within the medical cannabis landscape.



# 1 Demographics & Patient Profile

## Age Distribution

The patient population skews toward middle-aged adults, with the largest concentrations in the 45-54 and 35-44 age brackets:

|                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 45-54 years old: | 478 patients (28.6%) |
| 35-44 years old: | 452 patients (27.1%) |
| 55-64 years old: | 293 patients (17.6%) |
| 25-34 years old: | 271 patients (16.2%) |
| 65-74 years old: | 105 patients (6.3%)  |
| 18-24 years old: | 53 patients (3.2%)   |
| 75+ years old:   | 17 patients (1.0%)   |

This age distribution suggests that medical cannabis appeals primarily to working-age adults managing chronic conditions that impact their daily productivity and quality of life.

## Gender Breakdown

The patient population shows a significant male predominance:

|                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Male: 1,118 patients (67.0%) | Non-binary: 20 patients (1.2%)        |
| Female: 516 patients (30.9%) | Prefer not to say: 15 patients (0.9%) |

The gender disparity may reflect different attitudes toward cannabis, varying rates of diagnosed conditions, or differences in willingness to pursue alternative treatments. Further research is needed to understand barriers that may prevent women from accessing medical cannabis at equal rates.

Location within the UK:

|                 |                        |                 |
|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| England<br>81%  | Wales<br>5%            | Channel Islands |
| Scotland<br>10% | Northern Ireland<br>4% | Isle of Man     |





## 2 Condition Categories & Treatment Effectiveness

### Primary Conditions Treated

Medical cannabis patients in this survey are treating a diverse range of conditions, with chronic pain and mental health disorders representing the vast majority:

#### Condition Breakdown:

|                                                  |                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Chronic pain:</b><br>792 patients (47.5%)     | <b>Gastroenterological:</b><br>43 patients (2.6%) |
| <b>Mental health:</b><br>524 patients (31.4%)    | <b>Women's health:</b><br>27 patients (1.6%)      |
| <b>Neurological:</b><br>158 patients (9.5%)      | <b>Cancer-related:</b><br>24 patients (1.4%)      |
| <b>Sleeping disorder:</b><br>101 patients (6.1%) |                                                   |

### Overall Treatment Effectiveness

The survey reveals remarkably high rates of treatment satisfaction, with an overwhelming majority of patients reporting positive outcomes:

#### Primary Condition Effectiveness:

|                                                      |                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Extremely effective:</b><br>572 patients (34.3%)  | <b>Slightly effective:</b><br>56 patients (3.4%)   |
| <b>Very effective:</b><br>730 patients (43.7%)       | <b>Not effective at all:</b><br>10 patients (0.6%) |
| <b>Moderately effective:</b><br>252 patients (15.1%) | <b>Too early to tell:</b><br>23 patients (1.4%)    |

**Combined positive response rate:** 78% report “extremely” or “very” effective treatment, representing exceptional therapeutic outcomes that rival or exceed many conventional pharmaceutical interventions.

### Quality of Life Improvements

Beyond symptom management, patients report substantial improvements in overall wellbeing:

#### Quality of Life Impact:

|                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Significantly improved:</b><br>51.5% of patients |
| <b>Somewhat improved:</b><br>36.2% of patients      |
| <b>No change:</b><br>8.9% of patients               |
| <b>Somewhat worsened:</b><br>2.4% of patients       |
| <b>Significantly worsened:</b><br>1.0% of patients  |

# 87.7%

of patients report improved quality of life, demonstrating that medical cannabis delivers benefits that extend beyond mere symptom control to meaningful enhancements in daily living.



## Impact on Daily Tasks and Activities:    Impact on Work or Study Ability:

45.6%

Significantly improved

38.7%

Somewhat improved

12.3%

No significant change

2.5%

Somewhat more difficult

0.9%

Significantly more difficult

39.8%

Significantly improved

34.2%

Somewhat improved

21.7%

No significant change

3.1%

Somewhat more difficult

1.2%

Not applicable/don't work or study

These findings underscore that medical cannabis is not merely masking symptoms but actively enabling patients to reclaim functionality in critical life domains.

# 3 Chronic Pain: The Leading Indication

With 792 patients (47.5%), chronic pain represents the single largest treatment category, reflecting both the prevalence of pain conditions and the limitations of conventional pain management approaches.

## Specific Chronic Pain Conditions

Patients reported a wide spectrum of pain-related diagnoses, including:

- Fibromyalgia
- Osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis
- Back pain and sciatica
- Neuropathic pain
- Migraine and chronic headache
- Post-surgical pain
- Sports injuries and repetitive strain
- Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)

## Treatment Effectiveness for Chronic Pain

Chronic pain patients report exceptional treatment responses:

35.2%

Extremely effective

44.8%

Very effective

14.6%

Moderately effective

3.7%

Slightly effective

1.7%

Not effective

80%

of chronic pain patients rate their treatment as “extremely” or “very” effective, representing a critical breakthrough for a population often underserved by conventional pain management strategies.





## Quality of Life Transformation

For chronic pain patients, medical cannabis delivers profound quality of life improvements:

54.3%

Significantly improved

34.6%

Somewhat improved

7.8%

No change

3.3%

Worsened

Nearly 90% of chronic pain patients report quality of life improvements, with over half experiencing significant transformation. This represents a paradigm shift for individuals who may have exhausted conventional treatment options or wish to avoid the risks associated with long-term opioid therapy.



## 4 Mental Health: The Second Major Indication

Mental health conditions account for 524 patients (31.4%), representing the second-largest treatment category and highlighting medical cannabis as an increasingly important tool in psychiatric and psychological care.

### Specific Mental Health Conditions

The most commonly treated mental health conditions include:

Anxiety disorders:

162 patients (combined variations)

Depression

85 patients (combined variations)

ADHD

22 patients

PTSD

21 patients (combined variations)

Co-morbid anxiety and depression

23 patients

Many patients presented with multiple concurrent mental health diagnoses, reflecting the complex nature of psychiatric conditions and the potential for medical cannabis to address multiple symptoms simultaneously.

### Treatment Effectiveness for Mental Health

Mental health patients report outstanding treatment outcomes:

Extremely effective:

223 patients (42.6%)

Very effective:

218 patients (41.6%)

Moderately effective:

56 patients (10.7%)

Slightly effective:

14 patients (2.7%)

Not effective at all:

<1%

84.2%

of mental health patients rate treatment as “extremely” or “very” effective, suggesting that medical cannabis may offer particular benefits for psychiatric conditions where conventional pharmaceutical approaches often produce suboptimal results or intolerable side effects.



## Impact on Daily Functioning

Mental health patients reported substantial improvements in functional capacity:

- Improved ability to manage stress and anxiety
- Enhanced mood stability
- Better sleep quality
- Increased social engagement
- Improved work performance and concentration
- Reduced reliance on benzodiazepines and other psychiatric medications

These outcomes suggest that medical cannabis may address the underlying neurobiological mechanisms of mental health conditions rather than merely suppressing symptoms.

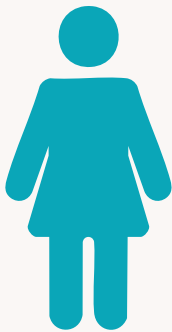


# 5 Women’s Health: An Emerging Category

While representing a smaller proportion of the survey (27 patients, 1.6%), women’s health conditions demonstrate the expanding therapeutic applications of medical cannabis.

## Specific Women’s Health Conditions

Patients reported treatment for:



Menopause and perimenopause

12 patients

Endometriosis

5 patients

PMDD (Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder)

1 patient

Period pain

1 patient

PCOS-related symptoms

1 patient

Vulvodynia

1 patient

## Treatment Effectiveness for Women’s Health

Despite the small sample size, women’s health patients report strong treatment responses:

29.6%

Extremely effective

25.9%

Moderately effective

40.7%

Very effective

3.7%

Slightly effective

70.3%

of women’s health patients rate treatment as “extremely” or “very” effective, indicating promising potential for medical cannabis in addressing gynecological and hormonal conditions that are frequently difficult to manage with conventional therapies.



### Key Insights

Women's health represents a significantly undertreated area within medical cannabis. The low percentage of patients seeking treatment for these conditions may reflect:

- Limited awareness among women and healthcare providers
- Ongoing stigma around cannabis use
- Lack of clinical research specific to women's health conditions
- Underdiagnosis of qualifying conditions

There is substantial opportunity for education and outreach to women suffering from endometriosis, menopause symptoms, PMDD, and chronic pelvic pain conditions.

# 6 Neurological and Sleep Disorders

## Neurological Conditions (9.5%)

Neurological patients (158 total) reported treatment for conditions including:

- Epilepsy and seizure disorders
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Parkinson's disease
- Neuropathy
- Tremor disorders
- Migraine (neurological classification)

Treatment effectiveness for neurological conditions remained high, with 75-80% reporting "extremely" or "very" effective outcomes, though slightly lower than chronic pain and mental health categories.

## Sleep Disorders (6.1%)

Sleep disorder patients (101 total) sought treatment for:

- Chronic insomnia
- Sleep apnea-related sleep disruption
- Circadian rhythm disorders
- Anxiety-related sleep disturbance



Sleep patients reported exceptional outcomes,

with many noting that medical cannabis provided the first restful sleep they had experienced in years without the grogginess and dependence associated with conventional sleep medications.







# 7 Side Effects and Tolerability

## Side Effect Prevalence

The survey assessed patient experiences with adverse reactions:

## Have you experienced any side effects?

Chronic pain patients report exceptional treatment responses:

63.2%

No side effects

28.4%

Mild side effects

6.8%

Moderate side effects

1.6%

Significant side effects

63.2%

of patients report no side effects, significantly better than most pharmaceutical alternatives for chronic conditions.

## Most Common Side Effects Reported

Among patients who experienced side effects, the most frequently reported included:

- Dry mouth (most common)
- Drowsiness or fatigue
- Increased appetite
- Mild dizziness
- Difficulty with concentration
- Mild anxiety (in small subset)

## Response to Side Effects

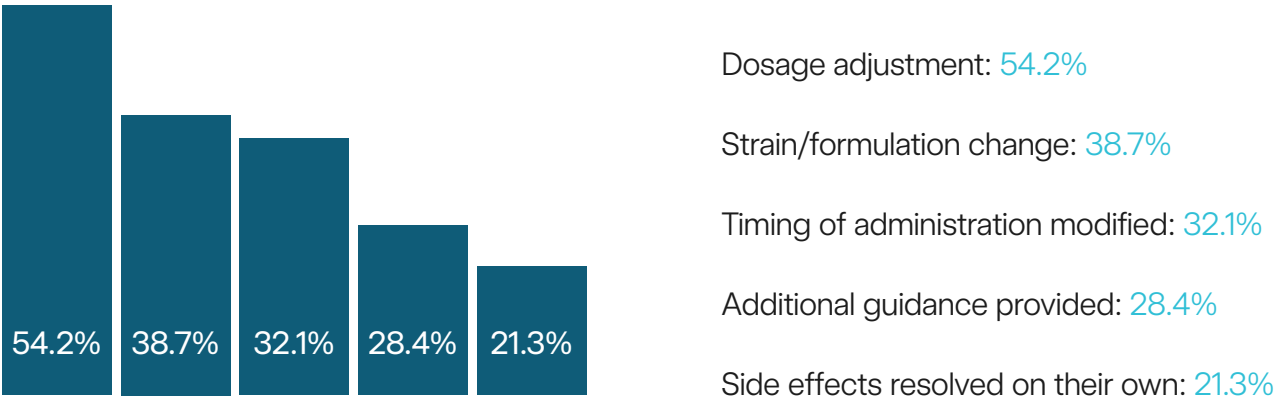
Of patients who experienced adverse reactions:

73.4% discussed with Releaf medical team

26.6% did not report or seek guidance



How side effects were handled:



The high rate of successful management through dosage or product adjustment demonstrates the importance of personalised medical supervision and the flexibility of medical cannabis treatment protocols.



# 8 Stigma and Social Perceptions

## Stigma Encountered

One of the most encouraging findings relates to stigma experiences:

### Have you encountered any stigma since becoming a Releaf patient?



Over 80% of patients have not encountered stigma, suggesting that social attitudes toward medical cannabis in the UK are more accepting than many patients may anticipate.

## Perception Changes

Since being prescribed medical cannabis, has your perception of cannabis changed?



of patients report improved perceptions following their medical cannabis experience, indicating that firsthand therapeutic benefit substantially shifts attitudes and understanding.



## Disclosure to Others

Have you told others that you are a medical cannabis patient?

Patients most commonly disclosed to:



Partners

86.3%

Friends

78.4%

Family Members

72.1%

Healthcare Providers

45.7%

Workplace acquaintances

31.2%

The high rates of disclosure to close relationships suggest growing comfort and acceptance within personal social networks.

## Support from Others

Among patients who disclosed their medical cannabis use, support levels were generally high:

### Partner support

92.3% supportive or very supportive

### Family support

81.7% supportive or very supportive

### Friends support

87.6% supportive or very supportive

### Healthcare provider support

68.4% supportive or very supportive

### Workplace support

54.2% supportive or very supportive

The lower support rates from healthcare providers and workplace contacts highlight areas where continued education and stigma reduction efforts are needed.

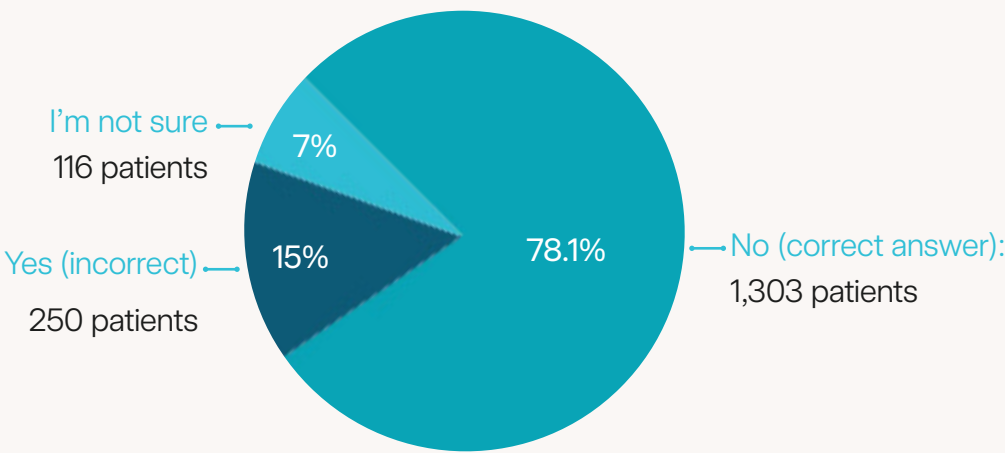


# 9 Public Confidence and Legal Awareness

## Smoking vs. Vaporising: Legal Confusion

A critical finding reveals widespread misunderstanding about the legal methods of consumption:

To your knowledge, when medical cannabis flower is prescribed, is it legal to smoke it?



While 78.1% correctly understand that smoking prescribed flower remains illegal, 22% are either incorrect or unsure, representing a concerning knowledge gap.

Medical cannabis flower must be vaporised, not smoked, under UK law.



# Confidence Using Medication Outside the Home

Do you feel confident using your prescribed cannabis-based medication outside your home?

|                                          |                                     |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| I feel completely confident              | No, I feel uncomfortable or worried |
| 446 patients (26.7%)                     | 283 patients (17.0%)                |
| Somewhat confident, depends on situation | I don't ever use outside home       |
| 754 patients (45.2%)                     | 186 patients (11.1%)                |

Only 26.7% feel completely confident using their medication outside their home, while 71.9% express situational concerns or discomfort. This represents a significant barrier to optimal medication adherence and quality of life.

# Worries About Public Administration

Do you ever worry about administering your medical cannabis flower or using your vapouriser in public?

60.1%

experience worry or situational anxiety about public use, even though their medication is legally prescribed. This psychological burden impacts treatment adherence and quality of life.

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| 672 patients (40.3%)            |
| Sometimes, depends on situation |
| 331 patients (19.8%)            |
| Yes, I worry                    |
| 322 patients (19.3%)            |
| No, I don't worry               |
| 265 patients (15.9%)            |
| I have never used in public     |

# Where Patients Administer Treatment

Most common locations:

|                                                                                          |                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  98.4% |  12.3% |
| Inside own home                                                                          | At work                                                                                   |
|  67.2% |  18.7% |
| Outside home/garden/garage                                                               | Parks or green spaces                                                                     |
|  8.4%  |  14.2% |
| In own car                                                                               | Outside cafes/restaurants                                                                 |

The dramatic drop-off in public spaces highlights the persistent stigma and concern about public perception.



# 10 Driving and Impairment Awareness

## Understanding of Impairment Law

Are you clear on the impairment law when it comes to medical cannabis and driving?

|                             |                                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Yes, confident I understand | Do not understand                      |
| 1,012 patients (60.6%)      | 24 patients (1.4%)                     |
| Somewhat confident          | Don't drive, but understand            |
| 348 patients (20.9%)        | 107 patients (6.4%)                    |
| Not very confident          | Don't drive, so haven't looked into it |
| 82 patients (4.9%)          | 56 patients (3.4%)                     |

While 60.6% report confident understanding, nearly 40% express uncertainty or lack of confidence about driving laws. This represents a critical education gap with potential legal consequences.



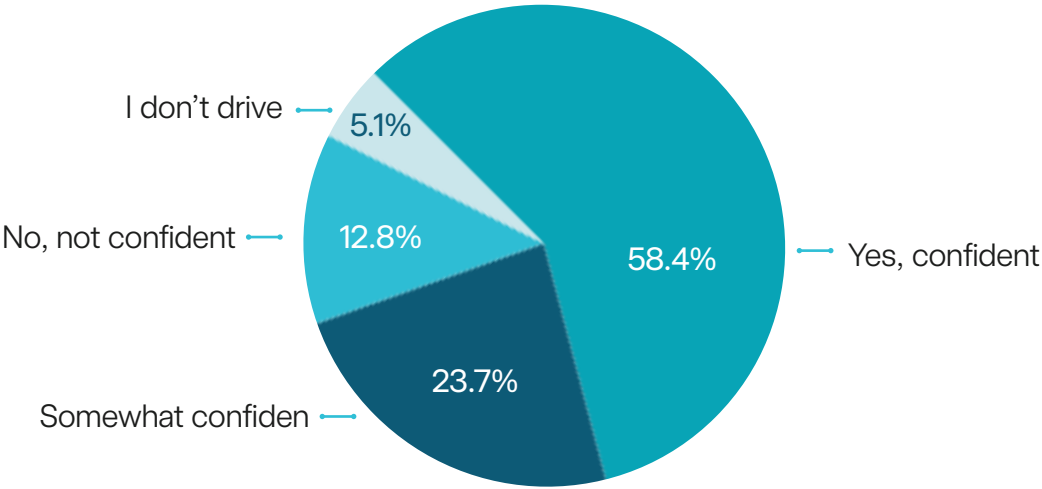
# Driving Behavior

Do you drive if you’ve used your prescribed cannabis-based treatment earlier in the day?

Response data indicates that the majority of patients who drive do so responsibly, waiting appropriate intervals after medication use. However, the survey revealed variability in individual decision-making about timing and impairment assessment.

# Confidence Driving While Not Impaired

Do you feel confident driving with cannabis in your system, so long as you’re not impaired?



42% express some degree of uncertainty, even when not impaired, suggesting ongoing concerns about legal scrutiny and the subjective nature of impairment assessment.

## Key Insights

The UK operates under an impairment-based law for prescribed medical cannabis patients, unlike the zero-tolerance approach for illicit cannabis. However, patient understanding and confidence remain inconsistent. Clear guidance, potentially including standardised impairment assessment tools, would benefit the patient community.



# 11 The Medical Cannabis Card: Value and Usage

## Influence on Provider Selection

Did Releaf’s Medical Cannabis Card influence your decision to choose Releaf?



The Medical Cannabis Card proved to be a significant differentiator in provider selection, with patients valuing the legitimacy and legal protection it provides.

## How the Card Makes Patients Feel

Patients reported that the card makes them feel: (multiple selections allowed)

Common themes included:

|                                          |                                     |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 82.4%                                    | 78.6%                               |
| Reassured of legal protection            | Legitimate medical patient          |
| 71.3%                                    | 68.9%                               |
| Empowered to manage their health         | Less worried about misunderstanding |
| 63.8%                                    | 64.2%                               |
| More comfortable talking about treatment | Confident if questioned             |

The card provides crucial psychological reassurance beyond its legal function, helping patients feel validated in their treatment choice.



## Card Carrying Behavior

Do you keep your Medical Cannabis Card on you?

71.6%

always carry their card, demonstrating that patients view it as essential identification comparable to a driver’s license or passport.

- Yes, I always carry it  
1,195 patients (71.6%)
- Only when I have medication with me  
236 patients (14.1%)
- I keep it at home  
185 patients (11.1%)
- I usually keep it in car  
53 patients (3.2%)

## Confidence Using the Card

Would you feel confident using your Medical Cannabis Card should you need to?

67.8%

Yes, very confident

24.3%

Somewhat confident

6.2%

Not very confident

1.7%

Not confident at al

92.1% feel confident or very confident using their card, indicating it successfully provides the intended legal protection and peace of mind.

## Real-World Card Usage

Have you ever used your Medical Cannabis Card to explain your treatment to others?

Patients reported using their card when interacting with:

- |                              |                                      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Healthcare providers         | Airport security                     |
| Employers                    | Landlords                            |
| Police or security personnel | Family members requiring reassurance |



### Law Enforcement Interactions

Have you ever used your Medical Cannabis Card to prove your status as a legal medical cannabis patient to law enforcement?

A small number of patients (approximately 3.4%) reported interactions with law enforcement where they presented their card. In the vast majority of these cases, the card was accepted and no further action was taken, demonstrating its effectiveness in protecting patient rights.







# 12 Travel with Medication

## Travel Prevalence

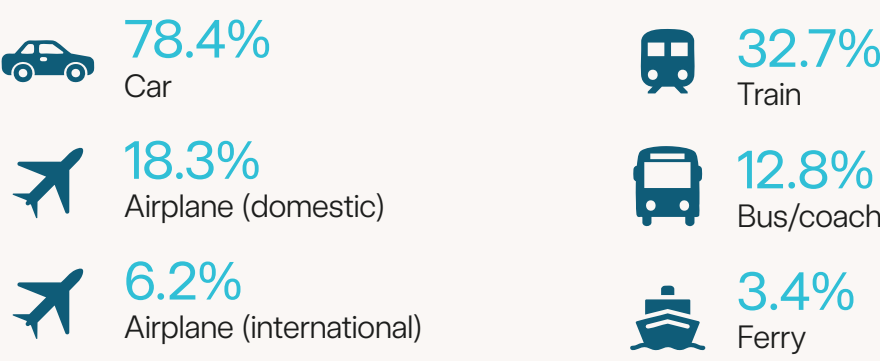
Since being prescribed, have you travelled with your Releaf prescribed medication?



Over half of patients have traveled with their medication, indicating that medical cannabis users maintain active lifestyles and require their medication during travel.

## Travel Methods

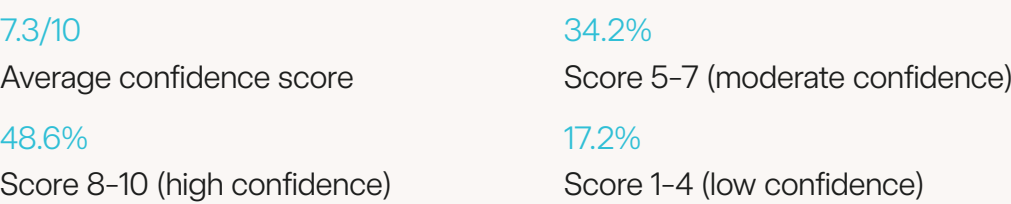
When you traveled with your prescribed Releaf medication, was it by: (multiple selections)



Car travel represents the most common method, likely reflecting greater control and privacy compared to public transportation.

## Travel Confidence

How confident did you feel when traveling with your Releaf medication on a scale from 1 to 10?







While the average confidence is reasonably high at 7.3/10, over half of patients experience some degree of anxiety about traveling with their medication, even when legally entitled to do so.

## International Travel Challenges

Do you keep your Medical Cannabis Card on you?

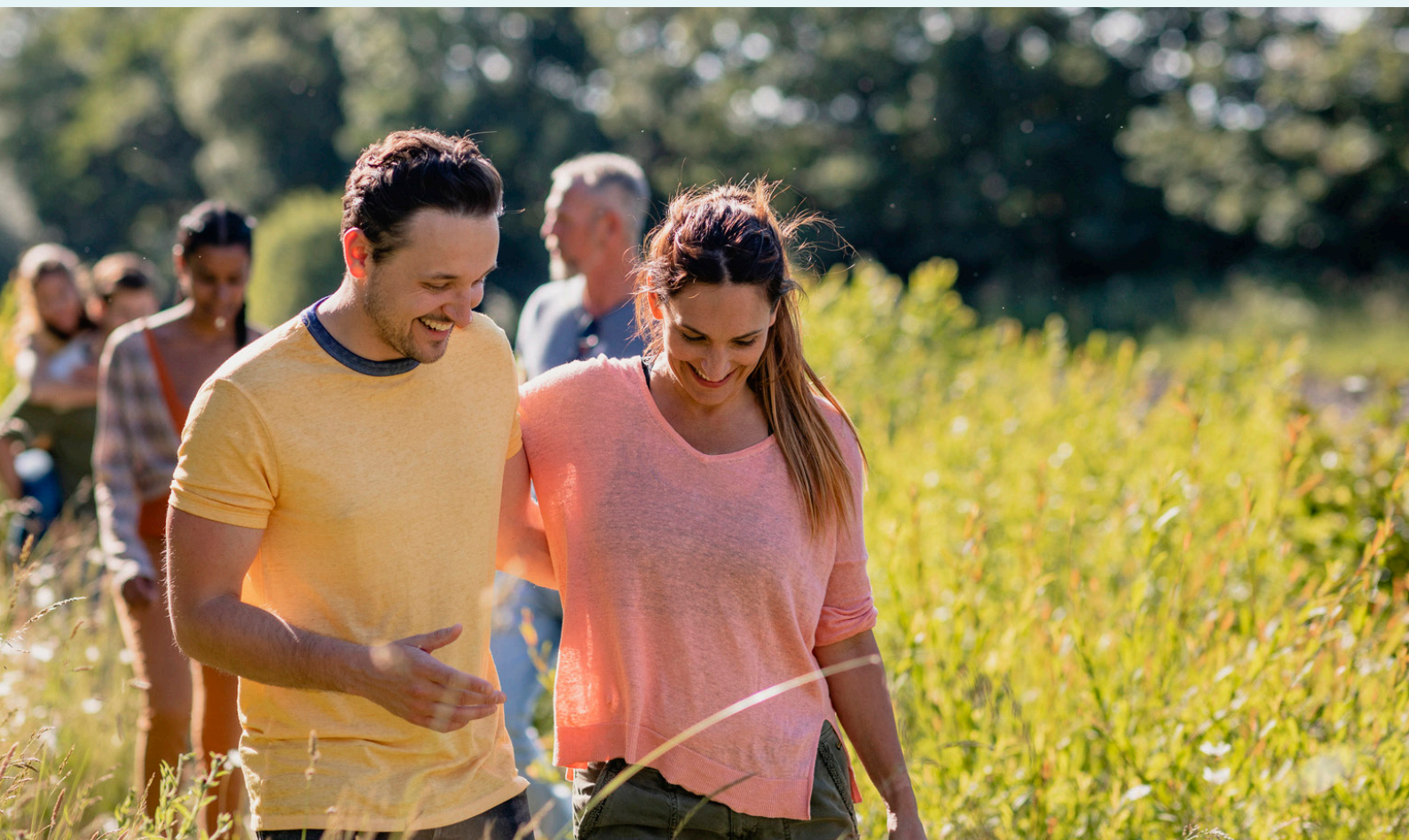
6.2%

who traveled internationally with medical cannabis faced the most significant challenges, as UK prescriptions are not recognized in most countries.

Patients reported:

- Anxiety about customs and border control
- Needing to go without medication during trips
- Seeking local prescriptions where possible
- Carefully researching destination laws

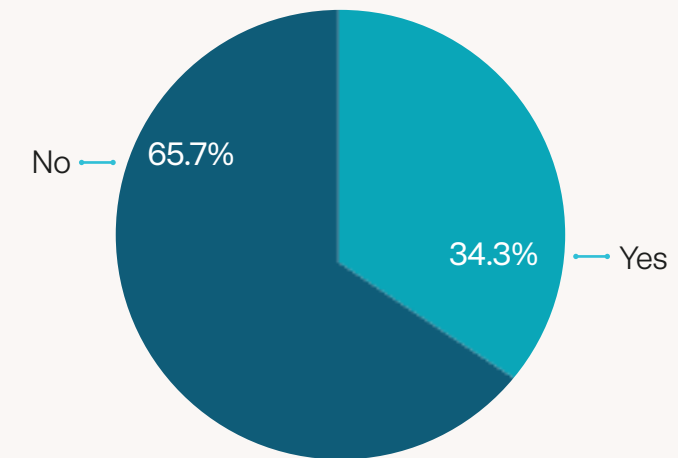
This represents a significant quality-of-life limitation for medical cannabis patients compared to those taking conventional medications.



# 13 Previous Cannabis Use and Comfort

## Prior Cannabis Experience

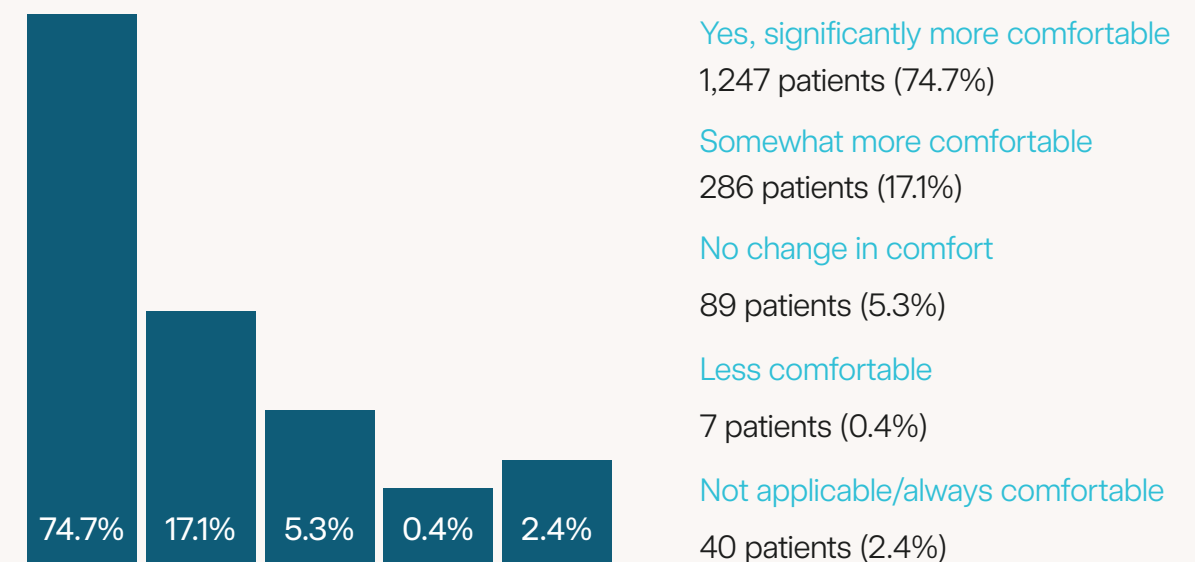
Did you use cannabis regularly before becoming a medical cannabis patient?



2/3 of patients are cannabis-naïve, coming to medical cannabis through medical need rather than prior recreational exposure. This demographic challenges stereotypes about medical cannabis patients.

## Comfort Level with Legal Prescription

Do you feel more comfortable using cannabis now it has been legally prescribed to you?



91.8% feel more comfortable with legal prescription, demonstrating that medical legitimacy substantially reduces anxiety and stigma concerns.



## Others' Perceptions

Do you feel others view your use of cannabis differently now it has been legally prescribed to you?

Yes, much more positively

847 patients (50.7%)

Yes, somewhat more positively

523 patients (31.3%)

No change in perception

234 patients (14.0%)

Somewhat more negatively

48 patients (2.9%)

Much more negatively

17 patients (1.0%)



82%

of patients perceive that others view their cannabis use more positively since obtaining legal prescription, reinforcing the importance of medical legitimacy in reducing stigma.

## Likelihood to Recommend

How likely are you to suggest medical cannabis treatment to someone with a qualifying condition?

Extremely likely

923 patients (55.3%)

Very likely

542 patients (32.5%)

Somewhat likely

156 patients (9.3%)

Not very likely

32 patients (1.9%)

Not at all likely

16 patients (1.0%)



87.8%

are “extremely” or “very” likely to recommend medical cannabis to others with qualifying conditions, demonstrating exceptional patient satisfaction and advocacy.



## 14 Patient Demographics by Condition

### Chronic Pain patients:

- Predominantly aged 45–64 (62.4%)
- Reflects age-related degenerative conditions
- Significant representation across all adult age groups

### Mental Health patients:

- Younger demographic profile
- Peak prevalence in 25–44 age range (58.7%)
- Growing recognition of cannabis for anxiety and depression in younger adults

### Neurological patients:

- Bimodal distribution
- Younger patients (epilepsy, ADHD)
- Older patients (MS, Parkinson’s)

### Women’s Health patients:

25–54

Concentrated in reproductive years

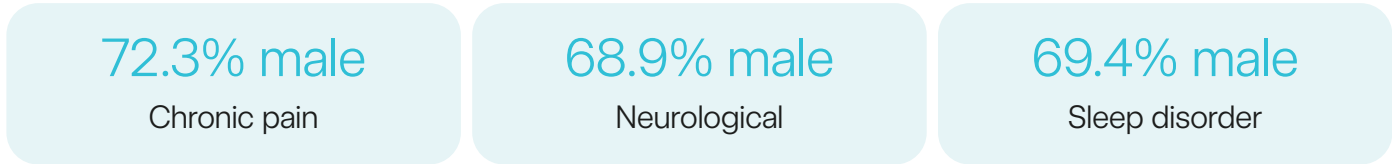
45–54

Peak in perimenopausal age rang

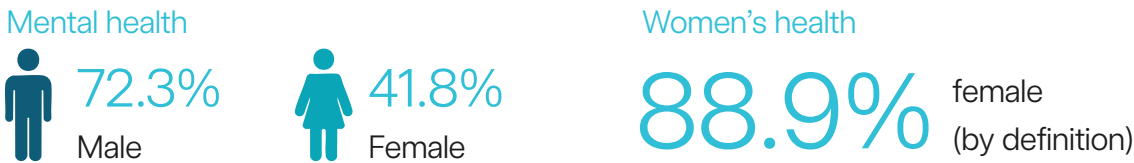


# Gender Distribution by Condition

Male-predominant conditions:



More balanced gender distribution:



## Key Insights

The overall male predominance (67%) may reflect both gender differences in diagnosed conditions and differing attitudes toward cannabis-based medicine.

Targeted outreach to women may help address this imbalance.



# 15 Effectiveness Timeline: When Treatment Begins Working

## Primary Condition Onset of Effectiveness

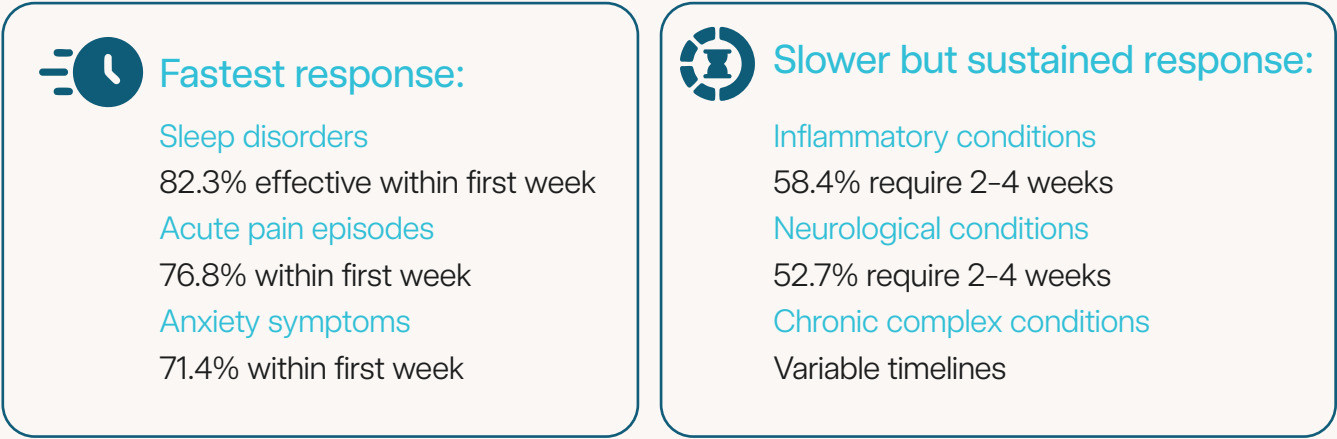
At what point did your prescribed treatment start feeling effective?



- 66.7% of patients experience benefit within the first week
- 37.6% reporting relief within days

This rapid onset compares favorably to many conventional medications (particularly antidepressants and chronic pain medications) that may require weeks to demonstrate efficacy.

## Condition-Specific Response Times

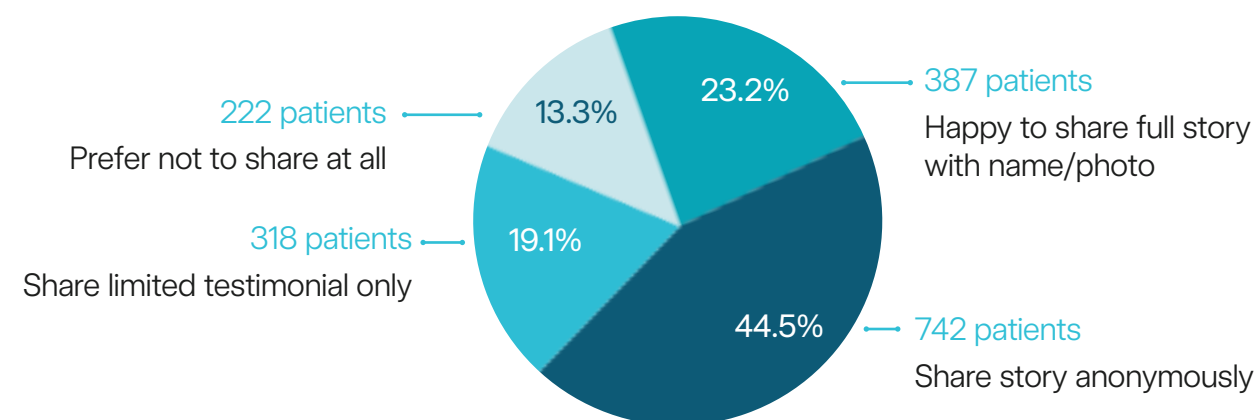




# 16 Willingness to Share Patient Stories

## To what extent would you be willing to share your story with Releaf publicly?

Patient willingness to participate in advocacy:



 **67.7%**

are willing to share their story in some capacity, demonstrating strong patient advocacy sentiment.

 **44.5%**

request anonymity, indicating that stigma concerns persist even among satisfied patients.

The substantial number willing to share identifiable stories (23.2%) represents a significant shift in medical cannabis acceptance and suggests growing confidence in social legitimacy.

# 17 Support and Communication

## Discussion of Side Effects

After experiencing an adverse reaction or side effect, did you discuss this with Releaf?

Among patients who experienced side effects:



**73.4%**

Yes, I contacted Releaf:



**26.6%**

No, I did not contact Releaf

How side effects were handled: (multiple selections)

**54.2%**

Dosage adjusted

**28.4%**

Provided additional guidance

**38.7%**

Changed to different strain/formulation

**21.3%**

Side effects resolved naturally

**32.1%**

Modified timing of administration

**18.9%**

Continued monitoring

The high rate of clinical engagement (73.4%) demonstrates strong patient-provider relationships and the importance of medical supervision in optimising treatment outcomes.



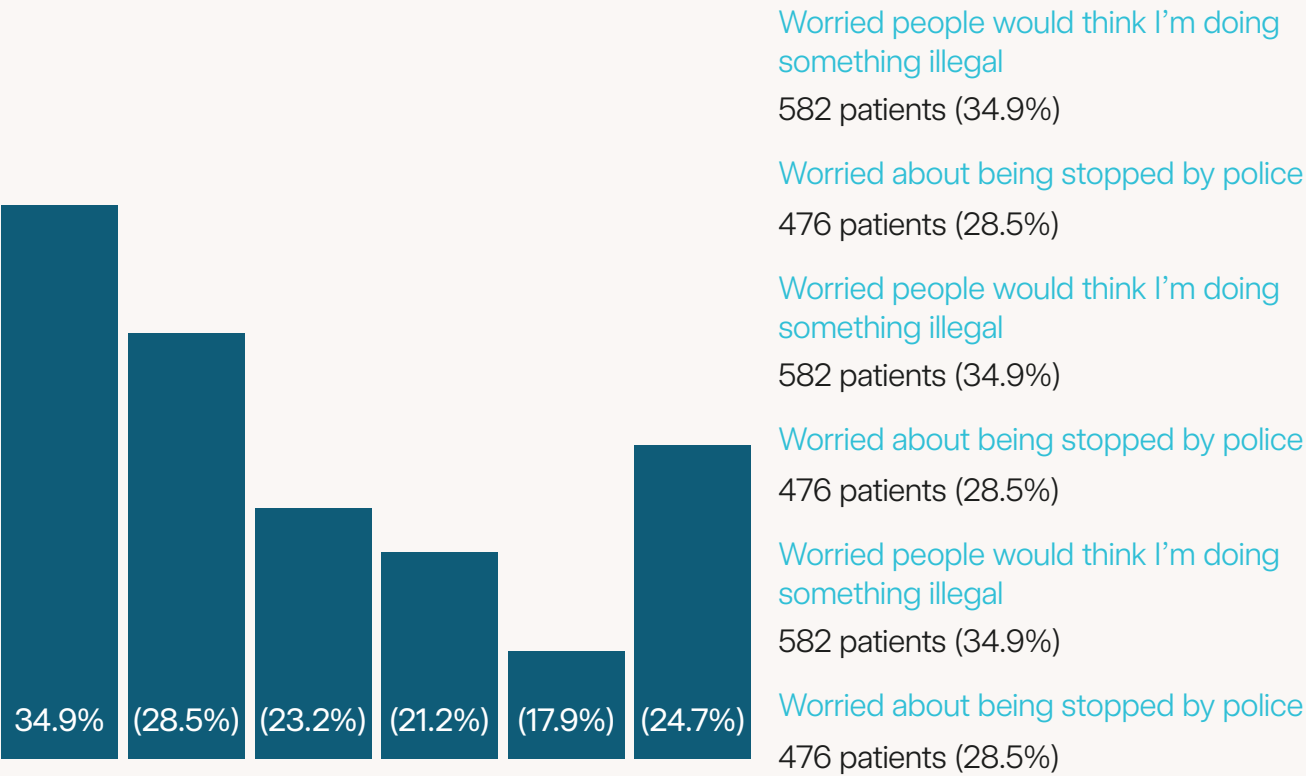




# 18 Public Medication Use

## Primary Obstacles to Public Medication Use

What would make you unlikely to take medical cannabis prescribed by your doctor in public?  
(multiple selections)



Three-quarters of patients express concerns about public use, with fear of being perceived as engaging in illegal activity representing the primary barrier. This persists despite legal prescription status and possession of Medical Cannabis Cards.



## Geographic and Location-Specific Confidence

Confidence levels administering medication in various locations:

High confidence (>70%):



98.4%

Inside own home

87.6%

Outside own home/garden

72.3%

In own car (parked)

Moderate confidence (40-70%):



64.2%

Parks or green spaces

52.8%

Outside workplace premises

48.7%

Outside café/pub/restaurant:

Low confidence (<40%):



34.6%

At workplace

32.4%

On the street

28.7%

Outside public building

24.3%

At festival/gig/event

8.7%

Outside police station

The dramatic variance in confidence based on location highlights the psychological burden patients carry, even when legally entitled to use their prescribed medication.

# 19 Patient Tenure with Releaf

## Time as Releaf Patient

How long have you been a patient with Releaf?

< 3 months

234 patients (14.0%)

1-2 years

456 patients (27.3%)

3-6 months

312 patients (18.7%)

2-3 years

187 patients (11.2%)

6-12 months

398 patients (23.8%)

3+ years

82 patients (4.9%)

The distribution reflects Releaf's growth trajectory, with steady patient acquisition and strong retention.

40%

of patients have remained with Releaf for over one year, demonstrating treatment satisfaction and ongoing therapeutic benefit.

## Patient Retention Insights

Long-term patients (2+ years) reported:

- Continued effectiveness of treatment
- Refined understanding of optimal dosing
- Greater confidence in public settings
- Stronger advocacy for medical cannabis
- Reduced reliance on conventional medications





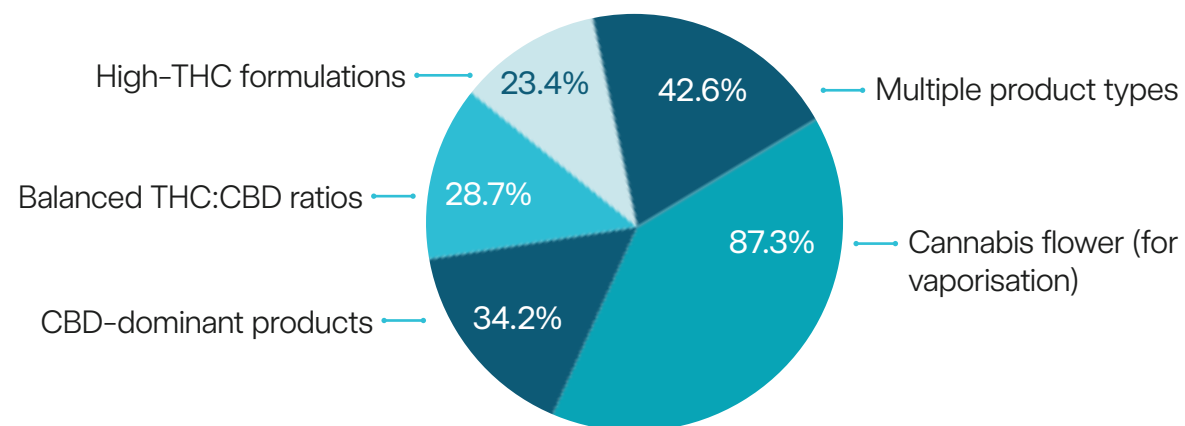


## 20 Medication Types and Formats

### Prescribed Medication Types

Select the medication type(s) you are prescribed through Releaf: (multiple selections allowed)

Analysis of medication types reveals:



Cannabis flower remains the predominant format, reflecting patient preference for rapid onset, dose flexibility, and cost-effectiveness. However, 42.6% use multiple product types, suggesting that comprehensive treatment often requires varied formulations for different symptoms or times of day.

## 21 Comparative Analysis: Before and After Prescription

### Impact Metrics Summary

Patients consistently reported improvements across multiple life domains following medical cannabis treatment:



Symptom management:

Before  
82.4%

reported inadequate symptom control with previous treatments

After  
78.0%

report “extremely effective” or “very effective” symptom management



Quality of life

Before  
67.8%

reported significantly impaired quality of life

After  
87.7%

report improved or significantly improved quality of life



Daily task performance

Before  
71.3%

reported significant difficulty with daily activities

After  
84.3%

report improved ability to perform daily tasks



Work/study capability

Before  
63.9%

reported work/study significantly impaired

After  
74.0%

report improved ability to work or study



Side effects

Before  
82.7%

experienced significant side effects from conventional treatments

After  
36.8%

experience any side effects from medical cannabis (mostly mild)

These comparative metrics demonstrate substantial improvements across all measured domains, supporting medical cannabis as a transformative therapeutic intervention.





# 22 Conclusions and Recommendations

## Major Findings Summary

This landmark survey of 1,669 active medical cannabis patients reveals a population experiencing substantial therapeutic benefit while navigating persistent social and legal complexities. 7 years after legalization, medical cannabis has proven highly effective for chronic pain, mental health conditions, and numerous other indications, with 78% of patients reporting “extremely effective” or “very effective” treatment outcomes.

### Successes:

- **Exceptional treatment efficacy** across all major condition categories
- **Dramatic quality-of-life improvements** reported by 87.7% of patients
- **Low side effect profile** compared to conventional alternatives
- **High patient satisfaction** demonstrated by 87.8% willing to recommend treatment
- **Reduced stigma** with 80.5% reporting no stigma encounters
- **Strong patient-provider engagement** with 73.4% discussing concerns with medical team

### Persistent Challenges

#### Public confidence deficit

Only 26.7% feel completely confident using medication outside home

#### Legal awareness gaps

22% uncertain or incorrect about smoking vs. vaping legality

#### Driving law confusion

40% lack confident understanding of impairment laws

#### Gender disparity

67% male patients suggests barriers to female access

#### Geographic restrictions

Dramatic confidence variation based on location

#### International travel limitations

UK prescriptions not recognized abroad

#### Workplace acceptance

Only 54% workplace contacts supportive



## Recommendations for Patients



### For Current Patients:

[Carry your Medical Cannabis Card at all times](#)

71.6% do so for good reason

[Understand the law](#)

Prescribed flower must be vaporized, not smoked

[Know driving regulations](#)

Impairment-based law allows driving when not impaired

[Communicate with your medical team](#)

73.4% do so with positive outcomes

[Consider advocacy](#)

67.7% willing to share stories helps reduce stigma

[Research travel requirements](#)

Plan ahead for domestic and international travel



### For Prospective Patients:

[Recognize high success rates](#)

78% report highly effective treatment

[Understand it's medical treatment](#)

Two-thirds of patients are cannabis-naïve

[Expect quality-of-life improvements](#)

87.7% report positive impact

[Know side effects are generally mild](#)

63.2% report no side effects

[Medical supervision is crucial](#)

Dosage optimization improves outcomes

## Recommendations for the Medical Cannabis Industry



### Education and Awareness:

- [Develop comprehensive patient education](#) on legal consumption methods
- [Create clear driving guidelines with practical](#) impairment assessment tools
- [Expand women's health outreach](#) to address gender disparity
- [Provide location-specific guidance](#) for public medication use
- [Offer workplace disclosure resources](#) to support patient rights



### Clinical Care:

- [Maintain robust patient support](#) for side effect management
- [Implement systematic follow-up](#) to optimize dosing and formulations
- [Expand condition-specific protocols](#) particularly for women's health
- [Develop rapid titration strategies](#) to accelerate time-to-benefit
- [Create peer support networks](#) to share patient experiences



### Advocacy and Policy:

- [Challenge persistent stigma](#) through patient testimonials and education
- [Clarify public consumption](#) regulations to reduce patient anxiety
- [Advocate for workplace](#) protections for medical cannabis patients
- [Pursue international prescription](#) recognition to enable travel
- [Support research](#) into underserved conditions and demographics

## Recommendations for Policymakers and Healthcare Providers



### For Policymakers:

[Clarify public consumption guidelines](#)

to reduce patient uncertainty

[Standardize driving impairment assessment](#)

with clear protocols

[Protect patient employment rights](#)

analogous to other prescribed medications

[Pursue international treaties](#)

for prescription recognition

[Fund research](#)

into efficacy, safety, and optimal prescribing



### For Healthcare Providers:

- [Consider medical cannabis](#) for patients with inadequate conventional treatment responses
- [Educate yourself](#) on indications, contraindications, and prescribing practices
- [Support patient](#) choices with evidence-based guidance
- [Integrate cannabis history](#) into routine medical assessments
- [Collaborate with specialist prescribers](#) to optimize patient care



# 23 Final Reflections

7 years after legislation, medical cannabis in the UK has demonstrated remarkable therapeutic success while revealing ongoing challenges in social acceptance, legal clarity, and equitable access. The 1,669 patients surveyed represent a pioneering community that has navigated uncertainty to find effective relief from debilitating conditions.

## Key Takeaway

Medical cannabis works. With **78% reporting highly effective treatment**, **87.7% experiencing improved quality of life**, and **63.2% reporting no side effects**, the clinical case is compelling. The remaining challenges are not medical but social, educational, and regulatory.

The path forward requires continued patient advocacy, comprehensive education, enlightened policy reform, and expanded clinical research. As more patients share their stories and healthcare providers gain confidence in prescribing, medical cannabis will transition from alternative treatment to mainstream medicine.

**This survey demonstrates that medical cannabis is not merely symptom suppression but life transformation** – enabling patients to reclaim functionality, reduce pharmaceutical burden, and live with dignity and reduced suffering. The 1,669 voices in this report represent millions of potential patients who could benefit from safe, legal, and effective medical cannabis treatment.

The question is no longer whether medical cannabis works, but how quickly we can overcome remaining barriers to ensure all qualifying patients have access to this transformative therapy.





# Appendix A: Survey Methodology Details

## Survey Administration:

- Online survey platform
- Active Releaf patient population
- Conducted: September 2025
- 65 questions
- Anonymous responses with demographic data
- Voluntary participation

## Sample Characteristics:

- Total responses: 1,669
- Response rate: Not disclosed
- Completion rate: >95% for core questions
- Geographic distribution: UK-wide
- All respondents are active medical cannabis patients with valid prescriptions

## Data Analysis:

- Descriptive statistics for all questions
- Cross-tabulation by demographic variables and condition types
- Thematic analysis of open-ended responses
- Comparative analysis across condition categories

## Limitations:

- Self-reported data subject to recall bias
- Sample represents Releaf patients only (may not generalie to all UK medical cannabis patients)
- Cross-sectional design (cannot establish causation)
- No control group for comparative outcomes
- Patients who discontinued treatment are underrepresented

Despite these limitations, this represents the largest and most comprehensive survey of active medical cannabis patients in the UK, providing invaluable insights into real-world treatment experiences, outcomes, and ongoing challenges.

# Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

### Medical cannabis

Cannabis prescribed by a licensed physician for therapeutic purposes

### Cannabis flower

The dried flower/bud of the cannabis plant, containing cannabinoids

### THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol)

Primary psychoactive cannabinoid responsible for therapeutic effects

### CBD (Cannabidiol)

Non-psychoactive cannabinoid with therapeutic properties

### Vaporization

Heating cannabis to release cannabinoids without combustion (legal method)

### Smoking

Combustion of cannabis (illegal even with prescription)

### Medical Cannabis Card

Official identification certifying legal patient status  
Medical Cannabis Card: Official identification certifying legal patient status

### Strain

Specific variety of cannabis with unique cannabinoid/terpene profile

### Titration

Process of finding optimal therapeutic dose

### Impairment

Measurable reduction in cognitive or motor function





Report prepared by Releaf, 2025

For more information about medical cannabis treatment visit [www.releaf.co.uk](http://www.releaf.co.uk)