



# PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Barbados Medicinal Cannabis Licensing Authority signs MOUs with two (2) strategic partners to solidify collaborative progress of the medicinal cannabis industry.**

**June 13, 2023 – Bridgetown, Barbados** – Today, the Barbados Medicinal Cannabis Licensing Authority (BMCLA) signed two (2) significant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with strategic industry partners – the Barbados Drug Service (BDS) and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI) – which will facilitate training and a collaborative approach of doing business in the medicinal cannabis industry.

The MOU between the BMCLA and the BDS spells out the collaborative responsibilities between the two entities that include import and export, inspections, transport of product, waste disposal and International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) Reporting, to name a few.

Chief Executive Officer (Ag) of the BMCLA, Senator Shanika Roberts-Odle, said, "This MOU is a symbol of solid partnership and mutual commitment between the Ministry of Health via the Barbados Drug Service and the BMCLA, where the role of the BMCLA holds purview over its regulations from seed to sale to where we transition to finished products and the BDS steps in as they hold purview over all prescribed drugs and medicine."

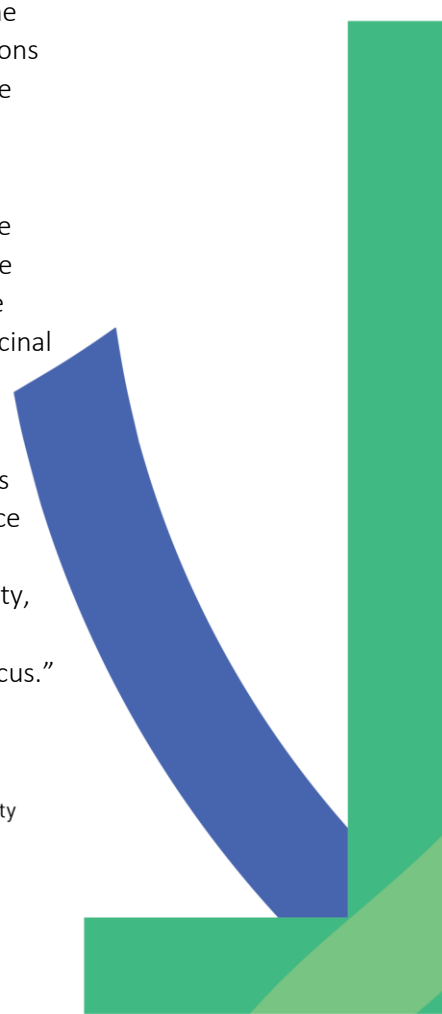
"Not only does our MOU make use of the skill sets of the BDS and the BMCLA which are already in place to ensure the health safety and the regulatory compliance of the industry, but it also assist in making the effort to streamline and collaborate towards the growth of the medicinal cannabis industry," she added.

Director of the Barbados Drug Service, Maryam Karga-Hinds said, "Henry Ford said, 'Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.' The Barbados Drug Service looks forward to continuing the excellent collaboration and working relationship with the Barbados Medicinal Cannabis Licensing Authority, as we seek to ensure high standards of practice in the Medicinal Cannabis Industry, with the health and safety of the population in focus."



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The MOU between the BMCLA and BDS outlines the following:

- **Import/Export:** The BMCLA is responsible for the compliance over imports and exports of planting material and raw cannabis, while the BDS is responsible for the compliance over imports and exports of finished medicinal cannabis products. However, both entities will work together to ensure compliance with the purpose of Research and Development as well as Laboratory.
- **Inspections:** The BMCLA Compliance Inspectors are responsible for ensuring that the rules and guides of the industry are followed when it comes to the regulations as well as the physical and technological controls, particularly when it comes to processing and manufacturing of cannabis for medicine. The BDS holds responsibility for the inspection of Pharmacy premises per legislations.
- **Product Transport:** When it comes to transporting medicinal cannabis products inclusive of raw materials, the BMCLA has the authority over the inspection of the vehicles. The BDS' Drug Inspectors can also carry out inspections as deemed necessary and once accompanied by a Compliance Inspector (and a written instrument issued) from the BMCLA.
- **Therapeutic Facility:** This is the treatment facility a BMCLA licensee would set up with a Retail Distributor License. While the BMCLA Compliance Inspectors would be responsible for ensuring that the licensee follow the physical and technological security measures, the BDS Drug Inspectors would be responsible for inspection of the Pharmacy before start-up, its annual inspection for renewal of premises, pharmacist registration as well as narcotics and narcotic register inspections as per the respective regulations.
  - **Waste Disposal:** Additionally, when it comes to waste disposal for a Therapeutic Facility, the BMCLA and the BDS will collaboratively inspect and monitor the disposal of cannabis waste in all forms. The BDS, however, will have purview over the disposal of finished products. However, the BMCLA will hold purview of the disposal of cannabis materials in the form of plants, seeds, leaves, flowers, buds, and tissue culture.

- **INCB Reporting:** This is the independent and quasi-judicial monitoring body for the implementation of the United Nations international drug control conventions. It is a requirement to submit quarterly and annual reports to this international body on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It is agreed that the BMCLA will provide the information to the BDS regarding processing, importing, and exporting of cannabis plant materials and products and the BDS would in turn be responsible for reporting to the INCB as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their records.

Building on the BMCLA and BDS capabilities to maintain compliance of the industry is a top priority.

In addition to the signing the MOU with the BDS, the BMCLA signed an MOU with SJPI. That MOU speaks to the opportunities for collaboration in training of trainers/facilitators in cannabis cultivation; practical and theoretical instruction of students in cannabis cultivation and the assessment and certification of those students.

Senator Roberts-Odle explained that “this MOU grows out of our work done with TVET resulting in provision of two (2) competency standards that will result in NVQs in Level 2 and 3 certifications in medicinal cannabis cultivation. SJPI came on as the tertiary institution to facilitate the technical and vocational education of Level 2, at this time.”

“Under this MOU, the BMCLA has agreed to cover the costs of a cannabis cultivation expert to train instructors, procure a plot of land in a suitable location to accommodate the practical instruction and hands on growing of the cannabis plant with the required compliance of security of course, and provide the funding required for the course, within reasonable cost,” she added.

SJPI has agreed via the MOU to identify the trainers/instructors who will access the training by the cannabis cultivation expert and create suitable syllabus and teaching materials based on the standards of the NVQ Cannabis Cultivation – Medical Level 2. SJPI also agrees under the MOU to deliver practical and theoretical instruction through the Distance and Continuing Education/Open and Flexible Learning Centre which delivers evening instruction at the SJPI.

“With the MOU in place, we are grateful for the chance to work closely with the BMCLA to deliver practical and theoretical instruction and training opportunities for the medicinal cannabis industry. We look forward to providing students with assessment and certification based on the standards of the NVQ Cannabis Cultivation – Medical Level 2,” said Ian Drakes, Principal of SJPI.

The agreements signed today provide for the sharing of best practices and recommendations by the entities through the respective design and implementation.

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**Note to Editors:**

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**About the Barbados Medicinal Cannabis Licensing Authority:**

The BMCLA, which was established via the *Barbados Medicinal Cannabis Industry Act, 2019*, regulates the handling of the medicinal cannabis industry. The BMCLA is responsible for developing policies, procedures, and guidelines to establish the medicinal cannabis industry and to ensure the medicinal cannabis is available to patients in a safe and efficient manner. The BMCLA is responsible for the issuance of licenses for cultivation, processing, distribution, sale, transportation, import and export, laboratory as well as the research and development of cannabis for medical, scientific, and therapeutic purposes.

For more information on the BMCLA, visit:

- <https://www.facebook.com/thebmcla>
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