

Medical Cannabis Elective

An overview of the Medical Cannabis
Student Elective Programme





Welcome from the Chair



Prof Mike Barnes

CHAIR

Welcome to our new student medical elective opportunity - a transformative experience tailored for the medical student keen to broaden their horizons with an elective placement in the emerging medical cannabis sector.

Legal under prescription since 2018, medical cannabis treatments for a range of chronic medical conditions have seen huge growth over the last five years, with over 30,000 prescriptions now written by over 25 private cannabis clinics and independent doctors.

The Medical Cannabis Clinicians Society (MCCS) is proud to offer the UK's first-ever medical cannabis student elective, tailored for UK based medical students.

Our medical elective placement offers a unique blend of clinical exposure, hands-on training, and interdisciplinary learning, designed to provide you with invaluable insights and skills in an exciting new sector.



With limited opportunity to learn about medical cannabis and the endocannabinoid system within medical school, an elective with the MCCS aims to bridge that knowledge gap with this introduction into cannabis medicine.





About the Society

About Us

The MCCS is an independent community of cannabis clinicians – the first prescribers of this treatment in the UK. An expert-led, not-for-profit community, we are dedicated to bringing this safe, legal and effective medicine to people living with chronic conditions. We provide the medical and scientific community high-quality education, training and expert support from the leading prescribers in the UK.

Our Mission

Our mission is to broaden the knowledge and understanding of clinicians and health care providers on the therapeutic benefits and safe prescription of cannabis based medicines.

Our Vision

The Society believes that everyone who could benefit from medical cannabis should have access to it through the NHS. We see a future where every health care provider and clinician in the UK understands and appreciates the therapeutic value of medical cannabis and it's growing role within the future of personalised medicine.





The MCCS Medical Elective: Pioneering Cannabis Education

Subject area Medical Cannabis

Duration 4 - 6 weeks

Course dates Flexible

Your elective experience will be uniquely shaped based on your interests. Our network includes leading doctors and clinicians specialising in a range of areas, so our elective placement can adapt to suit you.

1

Real-world experience

Participate in clinics run by the leading experts in medical cannabis, located in London, the West Midlands, and through virtual platforms.

2

Events and networking

Attend cannabis industry events, including, where you'll have the opportunity to network with industry leaders in medicine, pharmaceuticals and cultivation.

3

Research, education and mentoring

Get involved with fascinating research and education projects with global leaders in the field. You'll have free membership to the Society, so you can network with and meet fellow medical students and clinical colleagues.

4

Expert clinical training

Build on your foundational knowledge with our specialist medical cannabis training course. This teaching explores the history, evidence and clinical applications of medical cannabis and an introduction to the endocannabinoid system.

Programme overview

Pre reading and training

- Introduction to medical cannabis: Explore our guides and training materials, giving you a thorough introduction to the guidelines regarding medical cannabis prescribing.
- Expert training with Prof. Mike Barnes: Build on your foundational knowledge with our specialist medical cannabis training course. This teaching explores the history, evidence and clinical applications of medical cannabis and provides an introduction to the endocannabinoid system.
- Recommended Texts: Depending on your area of interest, we will provide a range of recommended books, articles, journals, and other helpful resources.
- Case Studies: A crucial component of our programme, you will review real-world examples of the clinical applications of medical cannabis. Gain an understanding of medical cannabis in patient scenarios, the dosages administered, and the effects observed.

During your elective placement

You will be assigned a Supervisor and arrange a schedule of activities. You will:

- Attend conferences and events
- Take part in the Society's events and activities, including attending meetings, training webinars, and meetings.
- Have the opportunity to attend two clinic opportunities per week, where you can shadow a medical cannabis prescribing doctor during in person or virtual patient consultations.
- Attend pharmacy training, where you will work alongside pharmacists to gain an understanding of the role they play in medical cannabis prescribing.
- Have access to an informal mentoring program, so you can learn from those with more experience in the field and ask questions as needed.

After the elective programme

After completion of your elective, you will have the opportunity to continue your involvement with the Society, its clinicians and members, and the wider community.

- You will be asked to write and share your experience of the placement to better inform future applicants about what they can expect from our medical electives.
- You will also be supported to bring medical cannabis education into your university medical school and peer community, with virtual Q&A sessions, webinars and catch ups.
- You will have the opportunity to take part in our research projects, either independently or as part of a team, as well as developing post elective case studies.



Student Case Study: Meet Rowan

Hello! When I was a final year medical student at the University of Birmingham in 2023, I completed my medical elective with the MCCS. I was keen to do my elective in the field of medical cannabis as I wasn't satisfied with the teaching I'd been offered in this area by my medical school. The MCCS is committed to providing learning opportunities for young clinicians and we hope to continue growing our educational platform.

As a continually developing field, we are available for any medical students with an interest in medical cannabis. Doing your elective with the MCCS will give you the opportunity to gain clinical and research experience in the field that is unavailable as part of standard medical education.



Rowan Thompson
SOCIETY VICE-CHAIR

Supporting future placements

As part of my ongoing work with the MCCS, I have the privilege of supporting future students in their placements with the Society. We welcome applicants of all degrees of experience - so don't be put off if you're new to the world of medical cannabis!



“For my own placement, I was keen to use the time to get experience in as many areas of the medical cannabis sector as possible. I was able to work on multi-national collaborative papers and projects, attend the largest European medical cannabis conference with the Society, engage with clinics and pharmacies across the UK, and make new friends across the sector.

These multifaceted experiences have helped me in my own ongoing contributions to the literature around medical cannabis. Additionally, my elective has started my work with patient advocacy groups across the UK.

Being accepted into this elective placement has been enormously positive. My understanding of the real-world experience of what medical cannabis can do for patients has shifted my perspective and helped me grow as a medical professional.





FAQs

01. What is medical cannabis?

Medical cannabis is the therapeutic use of the Cannabis plant to treat conditions and illnesses. Medical cannabis works by interacting with the endocannabinoid system in the body to produce an effect on various physiological processes. It has been found to have potential benefits for conditions such as chronic pain, PTSD, epilepsy, and cancer.

02. What is the endocannabinoid system?

The endocannabinoid system (ECS) regulates physiological processes in the body, from sleep and mood to appetite and pain sensation. It's made up of two types of receptors: CB1 and CB2. Endocannabinoids are signalling molecules produced by cells that bind to these receptors; they act like keys that fit into the receptors and open them to produce an effect from within. The ECS is believed to play a role in many diseases, making it a promising target for therapeutic intervention.

03. What are the benefits of medical cannabis?

Medical cannabis has benefits for patients living with conditions including PTSD, chronic pain, epilepsy, and cancer. It can also be used to manage associated symptoms, including nausea, pain, and anxiety.

04. What is the future of medical cannabis?

The future of medical cannabis looks promising, as new clinical studies are being conducted to further understand how it can be used to treat various conditions. Increasingly, doctors and patients are turning to medical cannabis for treatment resistant conditions.

05. I don't know much about medical cannabis, can I still do my elective with the MCCS?

Yes, absolutely! The elective covers all aspects of medical cannabis, from basic knowledge to more advanced topics. It is designed for medical school students who are new to the subject, as well as those with a deeper understanding.



Apply for our 2025/26 Medical Elective

We are accepting applications now. The application process is straightforward - simply complete the online application form, sharing your contact details and other information about your field of study. If your interview is successful, you will be required to undergo a DBS check and provide evidence of your medical school course.

We have one placement available per year, and applicants will be evaluated based on their medical background, interests in cannabis medicine, and previous experiences in the field.

If you would like to participate, please complete the online application form at the link below.



Scan to apply online



contact@ukmccs.org
ukmccs.org