



AzCANN Impact Report

Cannabis education and training
for health care professionals,
adults and young people
in Arizona.

Dec. 1, 2022 - Dec. 31, 2024

Program evaluation prepared by



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA HEALTH SCIENCES
**Comprehensive Center
for Pain & Addiction**



Acknowledgements

We are grateful for the contributions of program participants, including young people, families, current and future health professionals, policy makers, industry professionals and policymakers, all of whom have supported and improved our work. We hope this report rewards your efforts. We acknowledge the numerous Arizona agency personnel, including Project Officer Alicia Kenney and the executive leadership at the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), who made themselves available and provided invaluable feedback and connections. We are indebted to Galen Dara for original illustrations; to Stacy Pigott for editorial and publishing support; to Erich Healy for layout and design consultation work; to Stephanie Valencia and Victoria Silva for administrative support, and to our colleagues at Center for Transformative Interprofessional Healthcare (CTIPH), Arizona Poison & Drug Information Center (AZPDIC) and Western Region Public Health Training Center (WRPHTC) for support in content creation and statewide outreach.

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. The University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships and community service.

About the Comprehensive Center for Pain & Addiction

The University of Arizona Health Sciences' Comprehensive Center for Pain & Addiction is an innovative, diverse team of experts reimagining and transforming health care for pain and addiction. We advance science to provide students, educators, professionals, leaders and communities with evidence-based insights, therapies and resources. Together, we empower those of us affected by pain and addiction to thrive.

Spanning six colleges, and more than 30 departments, the center is rapidly being recognized as a national leader in cannabis across scientific, clinical, outreach and policy domains. In 2023, 94% of Arizonan medical marijuana cardholders report chronic pain as a qualifying condition. In the fast-evolving cannabis landscape, the nation is awash in chaotic and conflicting information. The CCPA's commitment to advancing the interdisciplinary science of pain and addiction is an essential resource at the forefront of the cannabis conversation.

About AzCANN

AzCANN, (pronounced ei-zi kæn), provides cannabis education and training for health care and social service professionals, the public, Arizona families and young people. Through a service contract with the ADHS, our core suite of cannabis trainings and materials are made available to all Arizonans free of charge. The goal of AzCANN is to provide useful and necessary information for Arizonans to help them make responsible and informed choices about medicinal and recreational cannabis in the context of cannabis legalization. The program champions a people-centered approach where all Arizonans feel included to seek and find answers to health questions. AzCANN invites Arizonans' curiosity and rewards it with credible, current and evidence-based content that encourages informed choice and responsible behavior.

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Citation

Cronin SP. Padilla AR. Cruz J. Vanderah TW. Cameron E. Butler S. Largent-Milnes T. Murphy BS. De La Rosa JS. AzCANN Impact Report: Cannabis education and training for health care professionals, the public and young people in Arizona. University of Arizona Health Sciences Comprehensive Center for Pain & Addiction. Updated March 31, 2025.

Disclaimer

AzCANN is funded by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). The contents are solely the authors' responsibility and do not necessarily represent the official views of ADHS.

Message from the Principal Investigators

Thank you, Arizonans, for contributing to this important work. We are committed to high-quality content informed by the expertise of strategic partnerships and Arizonans. We are an innovative, multidisciplinary team of experts working to synergistically reimagine and transform health care for chronic pain and substance use disorder individuals. We develop and redevelop education and training materials using feedback directly from our intended audiences. From hosting interprofessional education sessions with U of A students to attending local and statewide outreach events, we aim to be the training resource hub for Arizonans interested in medically accurate and innovative cannabis education and research. Together, we empower those of us affected by pain and addiction to thrive.

Todd Vanderah, PhD, Principal Investigator

Alyssa Padilla, MPH, Principal Investigator

Educational Sessions and Content

In two years, AzCANN delivered educational products in 22 in-person and online settings to 1,017 participants and reached 2,592 YouTube views.

Our program employs an ecological model by targeting health care professionals and preprofessionals as well as Arizonan youth, families and adults in the general public. We create shareable educational resources and present educational events in educational, community-based and professional development settings. AzCANN educational sessions and content ranges from continuing education workshops for health care

and behavioral health professionals and preprofessionals to classroom materials for health educators reaching youth and families. All content unites current cannabis science with evidence-based concepts of harm reduction, trauma-informed and person-centered care and positive youth development. Special consideration is given to accessibility to reach people of all abilities and diverse linguistic backgrounds.

TABLE 1: Number of educational activities/events by audience and setting

Audience	Educational Setting	Community-based Setting	Professional development/ Clinical setting
Adults, Youth and families	1	6	N/A
Health care preprofessionals and professionals	5	1	9
TOTAL	6	7	9

Examples of Educational Content Presented in Educational Settings

AzCANN Interprofessional Education Events| Cannabis is Legal, Now What?

THE NEED: Preprofessionals in public health and health care at Arizona universities need: 1) accurate information about the benefits and risks of cannabis use, and 2) guidance about using person-centered approaches to adequately engage patients and clients in promoting and achieving positive health outcomes. **THE CONTENT:** We presented in partnership with AZ-

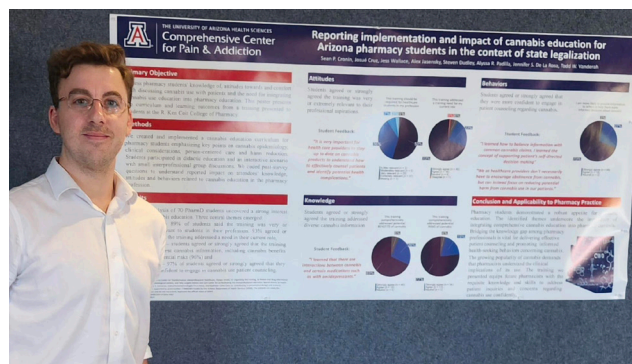
PDIC and marketed through the University of Arizona Health Sciences Center for Interprofessional Healthcare to a cross-disciplinary audience of pre-service professionals. The IPE provided up-to-date information regarding recreational and medical cannabis, specifically focusing on cannabis epidemiology, treatment and safety recommendations and learned and applied skills in having person-centered conversations. Presenters included Tally Largent-Milnes, PhD, Steven

Dahmer, MD, Alex Jasensky, Pharm D, Cori Cantin and Sean P. Cronin.

THE OUTCOMES: A total of 360 preprofessionals participated in four virtual events held over two years on November 9 and 17 in 2023, and November 7 and 8 in 2024. Students represented undergraduate and graduate students from all three state universities and included: 34.2% Pharmacy doctorate students, 25.2% Bachelor Science in Nursing and 22.9% Master of Science – Entry to the Profession of Nursing students, 9.5% Masters in Public Health students, 1.5% Doctor of Medicine/Masters in Public Health dual degree students, and 6.7% other degree programs students. In post-survey analyses, 97% of attendees reported the training was moderately, very or extremely relevant to their planned professions. Ninety-four percent reported increased confidence making informed choices about personal cannabis use, and 94.2% reported being more likely to provide information to others to help them make informed choices. We presented an analysis of the first year evaluating pharmacy students' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors as a poster at the AZ Pharmacy Association's Annual Convention, where the poster received second-place recognition.

Integrating Content into Higher Education Courses | HPS 306, Drugs and Society, University of Arizona

THE NEED: Preprofessionals in public health and students in courses focused on substance use in society need to understand the new cannabis legalization landscape, Arizona trends and legalization models nationwide.



THE CONTENT: We developed the following material for educators to distribute to their students during lectures or as supplemental coursework: Cannabis Conversations: Legal and Behavioral Considerations for Social Service Providers, (one-hour recorded training); How do Different Cannabis Products Affect the Body? (two-minute educational video); Cannabis FAQs and submission to AskAzCANN (online FAQ and survey), Principles of Promoting Responsible Cannabis Use: Lessons for Future Professionals (30-minute recorded lecture), and links to additional resources through our website posted as an extra resource.

THE OUTCOMES: Educators used AzCANN resources during course lectures and as supplemental online learning tools. For example, Bridget Murphy, DBH, teaches U of A course HPS 306, Drugs and Society Fall – a required course for all College of Public Health students seeking a Substance Use/Misuse Minor – and used AzCANN content. To date, 338 students have taken part in discussions around various AzCANN materials, with the 30-minute lecture video receiving 485 views since its publication.

"The responsible cannabis use and harm reduction video is an exceptional learning tool. In fact, I used it in the in-person Drugs & Society course I teach during the Fall 2023. Students engaged in some important discussions about cannabis. I also added it to the online version of this course as an optional learning resource. I will continue to use this in upcoming semesters."



— Bridget Murphy, DBH
Professor, Zuckerman College of Public Health

“It was really interesting to learn that over time THC concentration in cannabis products has significantly increased, and that the THC concentration in products used for medical study is much lower.”

— Master of Public Health Student

Examples of Educational Content Presented in Community-based Settings

Health Education Outreach | Adult & Youth Video Resources

Adult Safety Videos

THE NEED: Safety recommendations and laws for responsible driving with alcohol are well-understood by the general public. With the legalization of cannabis, health and safety educators need similar messaging for driving and cannabis use.

THE CONTENT: We created a short video for Arizona adults, “Know Your Plan: Safer Driving Tips for Cannabis.” Featuring commissioned graphics from in-house illustrator, viewers receive responsible consumption information related to cannabis use in Arizona. This includes zero-tolerance laws in Arizona for impaired driving and strategies everyone can use to keep roads safe. This video is suitable for anybody of driving age who may have initiated cannabis use or have peers who use cannabis.



Youth and Family Education Videos

THE NEED: Prevention content for youth and families heavily favors a primary prevention approach, which assumes neither youth nor parents have initiated cannabis use. However, this does not reflect state data about cannabis use in Arizona. Health educators serving young people, families and adults in Arizona benefit from the availability of educational resources which acknowledge the reality of use and promote responsible use strategies alongside the option of non-use.

THE CONTENT: We've created three two-minute



videos covering the health considerations for different methods of cannabis use, safety and harm reduction. Because we know the most important voices for youth are their parents, we include messaging for the parents in our efforts to protect and educate youth. Titles include: “Weigh the Risk,” highlighting the difference between healthy risk and potentially harmful risk; “How do Cannabis Products Affect the Body?,” discussing basics of the endocannabinoid system and the varying effects between smoking, edibles and other methods; and “Keep Talking: Tips for Cannabis Conversations with Youth,” destigmatizing the conversation between families, encouraging honest and ongoing conversations – even in the case of parental use. These videos are suitable for youth who may have already initiated cannabis use, have peers who have initiated use, or may be thinking about initiating use.

THE OUTCOME: Since the start of AzCANN, our educational videos for adults, youth and families have been promoted in internal and partner listservs, e-blasts and social media posts, targeting professional and lay audiences. These videos have been viewed 957 times.

General Public Health Education | Community Presentations

THE NEED: Arizona organizations are looking to enrich the health and wellness of the populations they serve and are interested in inviting talks and discussions on a variety of topics, including cannabis. AzCANN is open and available to present information and collaborate with organizations that align with their goals

and are committed to providing pragmatic, evidence-based and judgement-free information to empower individual decision making.

THE CONTENT: Partners have included nursing homes asking questions about drug-drug interactions, a public panel on harm reduction research, a cannabis Q&A at the University of Arizona Health Sciences' first Wellness & Wonder event, and a presentation on cannabis considerations from a rural lens for the State Offices of Rural Health webinar series.

THE OUTCOME: We have provided education for 151 audience members at community educational events, providing value to the community through quality information results in increased visibility and further opportunities for connection. Our presentation with SORH webinar, for example, connected us with a professor who is committing to include AzCANN content in their courses.

Examples of Content Presented in Professional Development & Clinical Settings

Continuing Education Trainings

THE NEED: Cannabis is being chosen by individuals to treat a large range of conditions and is in use for medical purposes in Arizona and other states. Understanding cannabis laws, evidence-based therapies for cannabis, our body's cannabinoid system and patient safety considerations is an increasingly important competency for clinical practitioners. This is a critical topic for ongoing professional training requirements.

THE CONTENT: We have recorded three trainings currently accredited for Continuing Education credits and one training accreditation. Two CE trainings are presented in partnership with AZPDIC. The first training, "What do We Know: Health considerations in a new cannabis landscape," provides a broad overview of cannabis effects in the body to clinical professionals in medicine and pharmacy. Todd Vanderah, PhD, developed and presented this training. The second CE training, "Cannabis Conversations: Legal and Behavioral Health Considerations for Social Services professionals," was developed by Bridget Murphy, DBH, Will Humble, MPH, and Sean P. Cronin. It provided an overview of Arizo-



na cannabis laws and shared about a method to adequately screen and broach topics of cannabis use for professionals in social service and clinical settings. Will Humble, MPH, a contributing presenter, was an architect of the state medical marijuana system, implementing all original policies, fees and other logistics. Our third CE training, "What is Affecting my Drugs: A further look at drug-to-drug interactions & cannabis," highlights cannabis interactions with common drug classes and common risks associated with cannabis contamination, developed and presented by Todd Vanderah, PhD.

THE OUTCOME: To date, 129 individuals have received CE credits through our partnership with AZPDIC, and our videos have received 825 views on YouTube.

Presentations at Rural Health Policy Conference, June 2023 and June 2024

THE NEED: Inform conference attendees – health care workers, public health workers, students, volunteers and other industry profes-

sionals working in rural areas – about the importance of cannabis competency among health care providers and community health education specialists.

THE CONTENT: AzCANN has presented twice at this annual conference. In June 2023, we presented about AzCANN during a panel discussion titled “An ecological approach to increase workforce capacity for addiction prevention, harm reduction, and treatment.” Here, we discussed our innovative approach in providing education for both lay and professional audiences, and, importantly, preprofessional health science audiences, creating an ecological environment of evidence-based cannabis education. In June 2024, we presented “Burning Questions: Using Community Feedback for Cannabis Education in Arizona,” where we discussed preliminary trends seen in efforts to solicit community feedback, including public survey responses and youth and health professional feedback sessions, and



how that can be used to inform future cannabis education.

THE OUTCOMES: In 2023 and 2024, we presented for audiences of 35 and 38 health care professionals for a total of 73 attendees at this annual event including doctors, med students, nurses, nursing students and others gathered to discuss health care in rural settings.

Community Outreach

AzCANN conducted 46 outreach activities, with an estimated reach of +344,900 individuals through public events, conferences, and articles and media reach.

We, at AzCANN, center community need for scientifically accurate and bias-free information about cannabis. To increase visibility of our core suite of trainings and to promote new educational resources, we participate in outreach activities including tabling at community events and conferences and promoting through organizational

partners, print, web, and social media to reach professional and lay audiences. To ensure we remain responsive to community voices, we also encourage the communities we serve to submit their cannabis questions through our AskAzCANN survey.

TABLE 2: Outreach activities by audience and setting

Audience	Educational Setting	Community-based Setting	Professional development/ Clinical setting
Adults, youth and families	6	18	5
Health care preprofessionals and professionals	10	3	4
TOTAL	16	21	9

Examples of Community Outreach in Educational Settings

- Sean Cronin and Todd Vanderah were interviewed in print by the Arizona Daily Wildcat “Project AzCANN: An honest cannabis education on campus and beyond”. The article

was written for a class assignment with the possibility of publication in the Daily Wildcat; editorial staff did publish it. The Daily Wildcat is published for U of A students, staff and fac-

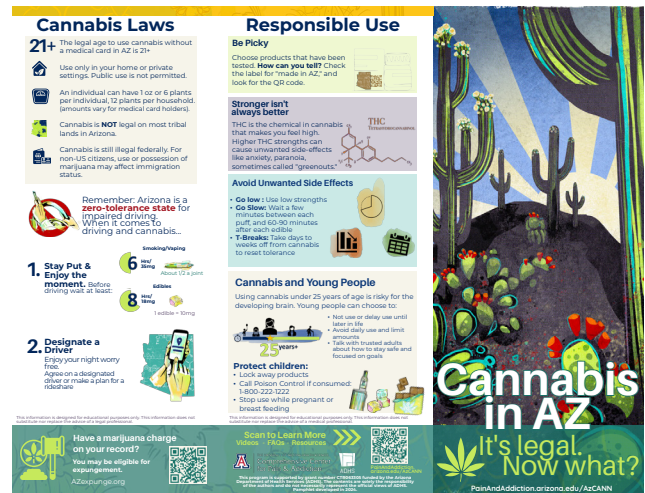
ulty, and alumni, counted at 244,417 potential readers.

- Todd Vanderah, PhD, and Mohab Ibrahim, MD, PhD, published the article “Should cannabis still be a Schedule 1 drug?” on the University of Arizona Health Sciences’ web-

site. The story examined the Drug Enforcement Agency’s classification of cannabis as a Schedule I drug and how it affects research and patient care. The article has received 12,173 views to date.

Examples of Community Outreach in Community-based Settings

- **Bilingual Cannabis Information Pamphlet:** We disseminated an informational packet with information about responsible use, laws and child safety in English and Spanish. To date, we have shared 1,836 pamphlets with 16 organizations.
- **Community Feedback:** AzCANN invites health care professionals, preprofessionals, and Arizona youth and adults to share their questions about cannabis laws, risks, benefits and other topics in our AskAzCANN survey. We have collected 497 unique questions. These efforts inform FAQs and future content and allow us to provide responsive cannabis education.
- **Youth Conferences and Community-wide Events:** Health education coordinators disseminated information and engaged in feedback with youth and educators on responsible use and their cannabis-related questions at youth events, including “Southwest Prevention Fest,” a state-wide, youth-led prevention event organized by Vive18, and “Tucson Youth & Peace Conference,” a student-driven conference with wellness themes. We attended community-wide events including the Tucson Festival of Books, Cyclovia and others. AzCANN reached 3,695 youth and adults.
- **Cannabis Industry Outreach:** The AzCANN team has an ongoing relationship with the Arizona Dispensary Association, which has facilitated tours of a grow facility, G4 Growhouse, and Sol Flower dispensary, and



facilitated the dissemination of cannabis pamphlets designed by AzCANN to 1,000 guests at the Arizona Bowl Snoop Dog Kickoff Luncheon. We also table at community events such as High in the Desert, an outdoor concert and cannabis industry event where we engaged with 120 individuals on the responsible adult use of cannabis.

- **Media Interviews:** Benjamin Brady, DrPH, and Todd Vanderah, PhD, were interviewed on television by KOLD 13 News in Tucson to kick off the project. “New Arizona program promotes responsible use of cannabis”. KOLD reaches an estimated audience of 10,641 viewers. Todd Vanderah, PhD, was interviewed on television by KVOA’s “Tucson Today,” outlining the safety benefits for the public that can come from improved cannabis research if cannabis is rescheduled

“I like the approach of the harm reduction aspect of it a lot. In the sense of not saying you can’t do this. I think a lot of people would be more inclined to listen to material [if it] was pick and choose of ok, what happens if you do it, and there are options if you want to stop or get help.”

—Student, Focus Group Session participant

from Schedule I to Schedule III. KVOA reaches an estimated 6,155 viewers. Ben Brady, DrPH was interviewed by State of Reform for a featured news article, “UA Health Sciences’ Comprehensive Pain and Addiction Center develops cannabis educational materials for the state.” State of Reform is a prestigious organization focused on bridging the gap between health care and policy and promoting collaborative conversations about the complex issues facing the health sector. Ben Brady, DrPH, was interviewed for This is Tucson, a website run by Tucson Media Partners highlighting Tucson events and news. The article discussed AzCANN’s goals and shared the need to develop content that centers self-directed decision making when it comes to cannabis in an environment of legal use. The article reached an estimated audience of 42,931 readers.



published in the U of A Health Sciences website, “Cannabis education program seeks to inform and empower.” This article received 1,260 views to date.

- Policy Education: Todd Vanderah, PhD, and U of A Health Sciences leaders hosted a policy discussion in Washington, D.C., related to opioids and cannabis in October 2023.

Examples of Community Outreach in Professional Development & Clinical Settings

- Coalitions and Communities of Practice: We maintain relationships with the ADHS, the Substance Awareness Coalition of Leaders of Arizona (SA-CLAZ), Arizona’s Justice Reinvestment Community of Practice and other state-wide organizations,

where we promote new materials, foster discussion and solicit feedback on content creation and community engagement. We have had a total of 313 total participants.

AzCANN welcomes your participation, feedback and collaboration to reach Arizonans. If you would like to use AzCANN publicly available materials, please visit our website at painandaddiction.arizona.edu/education/azcann or contact us via email at painandaddiction@arizona.edu.



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