

The Municipality's Commitment to Primary Health Care and Access to Medicinal Cannabis-Based Medications: The Case of Goiânia

Lucas Ferreira Pires Bueno ¹

Lucas D. Dias ²

Sandro Dutra e Silva ³

ABSTRACT

It is the duty of the State to ensure access to healthcare for the population, providing quality medical services, implementing preventive public policies, and promoting an environment conducive to the well-being of the population. In this context, the present work addresses the commitment of the municipality of Goiânia, a pioneer in the municipal law that mandates the municipal provision of medicinal cannabis-based medications. It also discusses the growing demand for these medications, the increase in legal proceedings, and the benefits of phytotherapeutic treatments with cannabis compared to allopathic ones. Furthermore, it explores the pharmaceutical and economic advantages and the economic viability for the municipality, as well as the prospect of including these treatments in the Farmácia Viva programs, provided there is federal regulation allowing the cultivation and handling of cannabis for medicinal and industrial purposes. Finally, it highlights the importance of building a Municipal Reference Center for Medicinal Cannabis (CRMCM) and the administrative, financial, and political challenges involved in this process.

Keywords: Public health; Medical cannabis; Reference center; Goiânia.

INTRODUCTION

Primary health care is one of the pillars of the Unified Health System (SUS) in Brazil, and municipalities play a crucial role in this context (GIOVANELLA, 2018). Moreover, ensuring access to medications is an essential responsibility of health systems; thus, the provision of cannabis-based medications has emerged as both a challenge and a growing necessity in various regions of the country (SILVA, 2023).

In light of this, patients with conditions such as refractory epilepsy, neurological diseases, cancer, and chronic pain have found relief in cannabis treatments (KHALSA, 2022). This has led to a significant increase in the number of lawsuits against municipalities, states, the Union, and health plans, as patients seek to ensure access

¹ Bachelor of Law, Master's student at PPGCF Evangelical University of Goiás, Email: lucasfbueno@hotmail.com

² PhD in Chemistry, Evangelical University of Goiás, E-mail: lucasdanillodias@gmail.com

³ PhD in History, Evangelical University of Goiás, State University of Goiás, Email: sandrodutra@unievangelica.edu.br

to these medications. The judicialization of health, through legal actions to ensure access to cannabis-based medications, reflects patients' pursuit of their fundamental rights to health, as established in the Federal Constitution, Article 196. This highlights the need for clear and effective public policies in this context.

Given the growing demand and the need to promote access to medicinal cannabis treatments, it is imperative that municipalities consider the construction of Municipal Centers for Medicinal Cannabis Treatment. This, however, requires substantial financial resources and a serious commitment to the health of the population. Therefore, this paper addresses the commitment of the municipality of Goiânia to public health and access to medicinal cannabis-based medications through the construction of a Municipal Reference Center for Medicinal Cannabis (CRMCM).

METHODOLOGY

It is based on exploratory and descriptive research, using primary and secondary documentary sources, as well as bibliographic compilation. The data on the legislation and regulation of medicinal cannabis in the municipality of Goiânia were obtained through the analysis of municipal reports, official municipal documents, and data available on the internet. Since this is an ongoing research project, other databases will still be analyzed for conceptual filtering and choices that adhere to the objectives of this scientific investigation.

RESULTS

One of the main benefits of medicinal cannabis treatments is the reduction of side effects compared to traditional allopathic medications. Many patients report an improvement in quality of life and symptom control with the use of cannabis, without the adverse effects often associated with conventional medications. In this way, the demand for medicinal cannabis-based medications has grown considerably across the country.

In the context of Goiânia, the municipality stands out as the pioneer in approving a municipal law that requires the city hall to provide medicinal cannabis-based

medications to patients who need this treatment. After an analysis of the literature (municipal reports and official municipal documents) and according to surveys by the Goian Association for Support and Research on Medicinal Cannabis, more than 300,000 residents of Goiânia could benefit from these medications. Therefore, this initiative represents an advancement in guaranteeing the right to health and access to alternative treatments (MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OF GOIÂNIA, 2021).

Cannabis-based treatments can also be advantageous from a pharmacoeconomic perspective for the municipality of Goiânia, due to their low cost and high therapeutic efficiency. Moreover, the local production of cannabis-based medications, if regulated, could reduce the costs associated with importing these products. This would represent significant savings for the healthcare systems of the municipality of Goiânia.

In view of this, the inclusion of cannabis-based treatments in the Farmácia Viva programs in Goiânia could further promote access to these medications. However, for this to be possible, federal regulation is necessary to allow the cultivation and handling of cannabis for medicinal and industrial purposes, in order to ensure the quality and safety of the products.

CONCLUSION

The provision of medicinal cannabis-based medications is a fundamental obligation of municipalities in the context of primary health care and the SUS. The pioneering experience of Goiânia demonstrates how local regulation can be beneficial for patients and healthcare systems. However, to make these treatments more accessible and sustainable, federal regulation allowing the cultivation and management of cannabis is necessary. The challenge of finding resources for the construction of Municipal Treatment Centers with Medicinal Cannabis is significant, but the commitment to the health and well-being of the population must be prioritized, especially for those most vulnerable. In this way, the present work emphasizes the construction of a Municipal Reference Center for Medicinal Cannabis (CRMCM) in the municipality of Goiânia.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

GIOVANELLA, Lígia. Atenção básica ou atenção primária à saúde? **Cadernos de Saúde Pública**, Rio de Janeiro, v. 34, n. 8, e00029818, 2018.

SILVA, Hygor Kleber Cabral; LOURENÇO, Rafaela Fernandes. A terapia com canabinoides e perspectivas em relação ao tratamento da dor no Sistema Único de Saúde. **BrJP - Brazilian Journal of Pain**, São Paulo, 2023;6(Suppl 1):S44-8.

KHALSA, J. H., BUNT, G., BLUM, K., MAGGIRWAR, S. B., GALANTER, M., & POTENZA, M. N. Review: Cannabinoids as Medicinals. **Current Addiction Reports**, 9, 630-646, 2022.

PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE GOIÂNIA. (2021). Lei Ordinária nº 10.611, de 14 de abril de 2021. Gabinete Civil - Sistema de Legislação Municipal. Disponível em: https://www.goiania.go.gov.br/html/gabinete_civil/sileg/dados/legis/2021/lo_20210414_000010611.html. Acesso em: 29 de setembro de 2023.