

Medical Cannabis Awareness Week 2026 brings the UK community together "for patients" this November

Multiple sessions from the 1st–8th November to bring patients, clinicians, researchers and campaigners into a collective and open discussion around how we can better work Together for Patients to improve understanding of prescribed cannabis-based medicines (CBPMs).

The programme runs 22 sessions across eight days, mostly free and online. They include live patient panels, in person events, clinician discussions, educational webinars, practical demonstrations and community roundtables.

MCAW began in 2020, when patients and others came together to share their experiences and help more people understand life with a medical cannabis prescription. It is organised collaboratively rather than by any single company or charity, and describes itself as an open campaign: "It isn't about one organisation, one group or one person's voice. It's about all of us working together for patients."

Why MCAW matters

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CBPMs have been legally prescribed in the UK since 2018, yet a significant gap remains between the reality of treatment and public understanding of it. Patients can face stigma, difficulty accessing treatment, worries about travelling or using their medication in public, and a lack of clear, accessible information.

MCAW focuses on four areas:

- **Patient voices** – real experiences from people living with prescribed cannabis-based medicines
- **Education** – clear and digestible evidence-aware information for patients, families and professionals
- **Community** – bringing patients, clinicians and organisations together in one place
- **Access and awareness** – improving understanding of routes for patient access to medical cannabis and challenging stigma that surrounds its use

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The campaign names the challenges it wants the community to focus on together: access, affordability, availability, education, stigma, understanding among healthcare professionals, and better evidence and support.

The programme

The 2026 programme is mainly hosted by three patient-led and community organisations: Medicinal Cannabis UK (MCUK), United Patients Alliance (UPA) and PatientsCann UK. The week opens with patients and closes with a look at what comes next.

Highlights include:

- **Patient Stories: "Why I Became a Patient"** (UPA, Sun 1 Nov) – a 90-minute live patient panel opening the week
- **Oxfordshire Standlake Arena Race** (PatientsCann UK, Sun 1 Nov, 10am – 3pm) – PatientsCann UK® Motorsports Team: our first wheel-to-wheel race with the #8 Classic Mini in the non-contact Prod A class, at [Standlake Arena, A415, Witney OX29 7PR](#)
- **Together for Patients** (MCUK, Mon 2 Nov, 6:30pm) – what MCAW is, where it came from and why it is still needed
- **The Clinics: "Eight Years On"** (UPA, Mon 2 Nov) – UK clinics on the reality of access, with patient questions in an "Ask the Clinic" segment
- **The Burn Pit Lounge** (PatientsCann UK, Mon 2 Nov, 1pm – 5pm) – meet patients in Northern Ireland, listen to their experiences, share useful information and build links across the community, at [2 London Street, Derry, BT48 6RQ](#)
- **The Doctors** (UPA, Tue 3 Nov) – if medical cannabis is legal, why are so few NHS doctors prescribing it?
- **Patient Social At Chongyz Lounge** (PatientsCann UK, Tue 3 Nov, 2pm until late) – patients can meet each other, swap experiences and relax in a supportive space, without having to hide or apologise for their prescribed medicine. Lounge entry is £5. Please bring proof of prescription and ID. [35 Renshaw Street, Liverpool, L1 2SF](#)
- **Understanding CBPMs** (MCUK, Wed 4 Nov, 6:30pm) – an accessible look at cannabinoids, the endocannabinoid system and current evidence
- **Global Activism Day** (UPA, Wed 4 Nov) – patient activists worldwide compare access, including the Global Patient Declaration
- **The Community** (MCUK, Fri 6 Nov, 6:30pm) – patients, clinics, producers and industry on how to work together
- **Grow Your Own** (UPA, Fri 6 Nov) – A virtual seminar focused on patient advocacy and cultivation education.

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- **Cosmic Tree** (PatientsCann UK, Fri 6 Nov, 1pm – 5pm) – another chance to meet patients, share practical information, hear about local experiences and create a supportive community feel, at [84 Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2NZ](#). Featuring KAST (Ka Aromatic Sensory Translation) to conduct live Terpene Analysis.
- **The Future of the Campaign** (UPA, Sat 7 Nov) – the UPA finale, where UPA presents its proposed 2027–2030 Campaign Agenda
- **No. 10 Downing Street Awareness Action** (PatientsCann UK, Sat 7 Nov) – Visiting No. 10 Downing Street in London, the home and office of the Prime Minister, taking the patient message to the heart of government. Including a Static Protest from 2pm–6pm.
- **Closing Event** (MCUK, Sun 8 Nov, 7pm) – Q&A, reflections on the week and plans for next year

MCUK sessions are free to book through Eventbrite. Platform and booking details for UPA and PatientsCann UK sessions will be confirmed. The full programme is at www.medicalcannabisweek.org.uk/events.

Quotes

"You don't have to agree with everyone, belong to the same organisation or approach things in the same way. You just need to care about making things better for patients and be up for working together where we can. MCAW has a history built on people coming together, and we'd love its future to be built the same way," said **Lee Bailey, Deputy Managing Director, Medicinal Cannabis UK CIC**.

"Medical Cannabis Awareness Week is a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness of legal access to cannabis, this year for the first time ever, the major patient groups are collaborating. We are stronger when we put our differences aside and focus on the bigger picture; fighting the stigma that is still a barrier to knowledge and wider access." **Clark French, Founder of United Patients Alliance (UPA)**

Elizabeth Spence, Patient Advocate & Lead of Women's Cannabis UK, commented, "I believe MCAW is of vital importance for the patient community, not just in terms of patient visibility, but also in terms of strengthening the ties within the community. When patients work together, great change is possible. The legislation change of 2018 demonstrated that, but now is the time to build on that legislation and create policy and framework that helps to both protect and grow the patient community moving forward."

"In an industry where we are so often divided, by opinions, loyalties and beliefs on the correct way forward: MCAW 2026 gives us, the patients, a chance to come together, share our experiences, the knowledge we have gained along the way and a

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the opportunity to steer conversations in the right direction, towards real change, that benefits those that need it most. No matter the organisation, patient or advocacy goals, education level or aims for the future, your voice and input are welcomed at MCAW and we look forward to hearing from you about how we can better shape the experience for medical cannabis patients.” from **Nicola Stevenson–The M-C Fairy (Independent Patient Advocate) & MCAW Volunteer.**

How to get involved

There are several ways to take part:

- **Attend** – join panels, workshops and patient stories throughout the week, open to everyone
- **Share your story** – patients, carers and family members can submit their experiences through the website
- **Become a collaborator** – clinics, pharmacies, advocacy organisations and industry can host sessions or support the programme
- **Volunteer** – help with events, outreach or behind-the-scenes campaign work
- **Support MCAW** – funds raised help keep the campaign free and open to everyone

MCAW 2026 Prize Raffle

The campaign is also running several raffles with donated prizes, and tickets start at £1. Newsletter subscribers get early access from 26 October, with general sale opening on 1 November. Entries close at 8pm on Sunday 8 November and the draw takes place at 9pm that evening.

The raffle is open to adults aged 18 and over in England, Scotland and Wales. As all prizes are donated, ticket money goes to Medicinal Cannabis UK CIC's running costs, less any prize delivery costs. It is registered with Coventry City Council as a small society lottery (registration LN226334558).

ENDS

Notes to editors

About Medical Cannabis Awareness Week

Medical Cannabis Awareness Week (MCAW) is a UK-wide awareness, education and community campaign focused on prescribed cannabis-based medicines (CBPMs). It began in 2020 and is organised collaboratively by partner organisations, not by any single company or charity. MCAW raises awareness, shares patient experiences,

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provides accessible education and challenges stigma. It is not a recreational cannabis campaign.

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2026 hosts

- [Medicinal Cannabis UK](#) – a patient-led Community Interest Company working to improve outcomes for people prescribed cannabis-based medicines across the UK
- [United Patients Alliance](#) – a patient-led organisation advocating for safe, affordable and dignified access to medical cannabis
- [PatientsCann UK®](#) – a patient-founded, patient-led Community Interest Company, giving free education, advocacy, peer support, and resources to everyone navigating UK medical cannabis.

Media contact

- Email: press@mcukcic.co.uk
- Website: www.medicalcannabisweek.org.uk

Interviews with organisers, speakers and patients can be arranged on request. Logos and brand assets are available without charge in the MCAW Partner Toolkit.

Key facts

Dates	Sunday 1 – Sunday 8 November 2026
Theme	Together for Patients
Sessions	22, mostly free and online
Hosts	Medicinal Cannabis UK, United Patients Alliance, PatientsCann UK
First held	2020