

Those using marijuana are advised to consult with health care professionals prior to use

Written By **JASEN OBERMEYER**

Canada's legalization of cannabis has certainly been a hotly talked about discussion, and a controversial decision.

Led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's liberal government, some argue the legalization will now change society, and will bring a positive impact. Others argue it will have a more negative influence.

Margerit Bebawy, owner of Caravaggio I.D.A. Pharmacy, voiced her concerns of the dangers of drug use in teens and young adults, arguing that for those particularly under 25, there can be alterations to the brain and harmful development. ?It could possibly be permanent.?

She explained for those looking to use the drug, they need to do research, get facts, and consult a health care professional particularly a pharmacist. ?Not a lot is known.?

After Uruguay, Canada has become the second nation in the world to formally legalize the plant.

The Prime Minister previously stated that Canada's system of marijuana prohibition doesn't work nor prevent young people from using marijuana.

Though it is illegal to drive if you are high, Ms. Bebawy said some still might do it, as similar to drinking; they will be impaired even after several hours since taking it.

?Not a lot of people right now will be very comfortable if they see a friend smoking.? She advised that since it varies from person to person, like drinking, ensure that someone sober will pick you up.

Her concern is that all the talk on how the drug could help has not been proven. ?I don't want anyone to get overly excited about using it, or trying something that might do more harm than good,? she said. ?Just because it's legal, doesn't mean it's safe.?

Ms. Bebawy added there is still the debate on whether marijuana is a gateway drug. ?We are already in an opioid crisis now, will this lead to an increase??

She noted it is tough to determine the full impact right away, and will be for sometime. ?It's hard to say if people will be using it responsibly. We'll have to wait and see how much it will affect the community.?