



The Jacobs Center  
Research Seminar Series

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## Managing the Public Health Impact of Nonmedical Cannabis Legalization

In 2018, Canada became the second country in the world to legalize nonmedical cannabis use which provided a unique opportunity to rigorously evaluate a novel policy with important public health implications. At the time, preliminary evaluations of nonmedical cannabis legalization were very limited due to a lack of baseline data and a lack of comparable data sources across jurisdictions and over time, as well as inadequate detail in traditional cannabis monitoring surveys. The major questions plaguing decision makers about the impact of nonmedical cannabis legalization included concerns about increased use, risky use, transitions from illicit sources, concerns about commercialization on social norms and use patterns, among other uncertainties. Much of the empirical evidence that existed to inform Canadian conversations came from US states that had legalized nonmedical cannabis in 2012, however, US states with liberalized policies continue to operate in much different policy settings given federal prohibitions on these products. There was an urgent need for evidence to inform specific regulatory measures that may determine the short and long term impact of legalization including effectiveness of labelling, marketing, and other product regulations. Furthermore, it was necessary for all of this to be Canada-specific and culturally tailored to its populations as there are important governance differences between Canadian and US contexts. This presentation will provide an outline of findings and regulatory considerations from a pilot project for any country preparing to embark on this health policy experiment which highlight the importance of measuring upstream policy measures to understand the impact to downstream behaviours affecting population health. It will also describe its evolution to its current state as an international cannabis surveillance tool which measures policy specific variables to provide an evidence base to national cannabis control conversations.

**Friday, March 26, 2021, 10:00 h**

Online via Zoom with the following link:

<https://uzh.zoom.us/j/96861258573?pwd=QmNUdi9QeGpnL1dVbVNYRENGdGZsZz09>

*Individual meetings with Dr. Leos-Toro are available,*

*if interested please contact Marta Dobrijevic at [marta.dobrijevic@jacobscenter.uzh.ch](mailto:marta.dobrijevic@jacobscenter.uzh.ch)*