

Legalise and regulate cannabis – promote public health and support the NHS.

To Home Secretary Sajid Javid MP and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock MP

We all love the NHS. But without a serious cash injection, its future hangs in the balance. At the moment, there is no clear plan for where this funding will come from.

Yet a potential source of tax revenue that could help fund the NHS is being ignored.

If the government legalise and regulate cannabis, we can raise at least £1 billion each year in tax revenue. This would fund all the 21,890 (FTE) midwives in England, with money left over for harm reduction, drug education and mental health services.

As well as raising money for public services, legalisation and regulation of cannabis will benefit public health. **It will be a win-win situation for our NHS and public health.**

Regulating cannabis will help to restrict young people's access to cannabis and protect them from the risks of high strength skunk. It could also steer people who use cannabis towards healthier behaviours – using fewer or less risky products.

If we legalise and regulate medicinal cannabis in parallel, we will benefit patients with a wide range of illnesses as well as saving money on prescription drugs. This will be good for public health, and good for public health care.

This is an idea whose time has come. This year, Canada will become the first G7 country to vote to legalise and regulate cannabis, following in the footsteps of Uruguay, and US states like California and Colorado. These places are showing that the failed war on drugs is slowly being replaced by responsible regulation, protecting public health and raising tax revenues for public services. It is time for the UK to catch up with this global shift and legalise and regulate cannabis.