

# DECADES vs DAYS

In 45 days, the cannabis industry can take life-saving, corrective actions that took the U.S. government 45 years to implement.



## Vape Crisis Guidance: Industry

**Whether or not legal cannabis products are the cause, this crisis is negatively impacting the legal cannabis industry and ruining the public's trust around cannabis. Current calls for federal legislative and regulatory actions are not enough. We can and must do better.**

**It is time for the cannabis industry to take immediate action.**

### What Is Known

As of October 17, 2019, the U.S. Center for Disease Control has received reports of 33 deaths and 1,479 lung injury cases associated with the use of e-cigarettes or vaping across 49 states. At this time, FDA and CDC have not identified the cause(s) of the lung injuries in these cases, and the only commonality among all cases is that patients report the use of vaping products. This outbreak might have more than one cause, and many different substances and product sources are still under investigation. The specific chemical exposure(s) causing lung injuries associated with e-cigarette product use, or vaping, remains unknown at this time.

However, even though no cause has been identified, most patients report a history of using products containing cannabis. The latest national and state findings suggest products containing THC, particularly those from the street or other informal sources (e.g. friends, family members, illicit dealers), are linked to most of the cases and play a major role in the outbreak.

### What Can Be Done

FOCUS has created this list of suggested actions and resources to provide licensed cannabis operators suggestions that can be implemented immediately to minimize further damage and begin to rebuild trust. This list is in no way exhaustive, nor is this information intended as a resolution to the vape related issues within the cannabis industry. A real resolution will take time, research, and the implementation of comprehensive cannabis standards across all sectors of the industry.

### Producers/Processors/Manufacturers

- 1. Stop making cannabis vape products until we know more on the causes and risks**
- 2. Publicly proclaim your commitment to report/share all complaints, recalls, failed testing, returned products to the appropriate state agency**
- 3. Only produce vape products that are pure THC or CBD oil**
  - a. Stop the use of additives, ingredients or thickening agents until cannabis specific safety data is available
- 4. Immediately update labeling to fully disclose any and all ingredients on all products regardless of state labeling requirements.**
- 5. List all Certificate of Analyses on website with references/links to specific products**
  - a. Connect C of A's through QR codes or other available tracking mechanisms
- 6. Support research studies with reputable Clinical Research Organizations to expedite the collection of reliable data on the risks of vaping and the causes of lung injuries**

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**The Cannabis Health and Safety Organization**

For more information or assistance implementing these important changes,  
please email [info@focusstandards.org](mailto:info@focusstandards.org) or visit [www.focusstandards.org](http://www.focusstandards.org)

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## Retailers

- 1. Stop selling cannabis vape products until we know more on the causes and risks**
- 2. Publicly proclaim your commitment to report/share all complaints, recalls, failed testing, returned products to the appropriate state agency – and do it**
  - a. Hold yourself, your team, your brand, and your suppliers accountable.
  - b. Develop internal policies, procedures and consequences for failing to comply
  - c. Make policies, procedures readily available for staff and the public to see
  - d. Start making product quality and safety a part of daily conversations
- 3. Control the quality of the cannabis products you carry**
  - a. Implement a supplier qualification plan stating the required conditions products must meet to be carried in your facility
    - i. Certificate of Analysis Guidelines
      1. Must not contain anything except cannabis oil in vape cartridges
      2. COA must be current and traceable to the specific batch/product
      3. COAs from labs that are not third-party accredited must not be accepted
    - ii. Certificate of Analysis
    - iii. Provide a phone number for questions/concerns
  - b. Require producers/processors/manufacturers to provide patient/consumer information on their website that contains:
    - i. List all ingredients
    - ii. Certificate of Analysis
    - iii. Provide a phone number for questions/concerns
  - c. Require producers/processors/manufacturers to carry and provide a current copy of their product liability insurance policy
- 4. Provide training to all employees on how to talk to patients about the vape crisis and the efforts your team is making to protect them.**
- 5. Provide the FOCUS Patient & Consumer Educational Resource to all patients**

## About FOCUS (Foundation of Cannabis Unified Standards)

Established in 2014 as The Cannabis Health and Safety Organization, FOCUS is a 501c3 non-profit that addresses the many shortcomings in quality, safety, and consistency that have become evident with the explosive growth of the global cannabis industry. Our primary mission is to protect public health, consumer safety, and safeguard the environment. To that end, we develop and implement cannabis-specific Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) standards and provide third-party certification to address the quality, safety, and consistency issues within the cannabis industry. FOCUS is the first organization to develop cannabis-specific voluntary consensus standards following American National Standards Institute (ANSI) guidelines. FOCUS is not a cannabis company, an industry trade association, or an advocacy organization. FOCUS is an unbiased, third-party with no financial stake in, or funding from, the cannabis industry. FOCUS does not advocate on behalf of, or push, cannabis policy. FOCUS exists to help ensure the rapidly growing global cannabis industry has the necessary protections in place for the health, safety, success, and welfare of everyone. This autonomy fosters a principled, objective organization that protects end users, and acts as the much-needed neutral, nonpartisan bridge between industry and regulatory.



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