

# **When the Smoke Clears: What did the U.S. Surgeon General Really Say?**

**Drug-Free America Foundation**

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(St. Petersburg, FL) Yesterday, mainstream media reported that Dr. Vivek Murthy, the new United States Surgeon General supports medical marijuana. All the headlines alluded to a major policy shift but few media outlets bothered to update their headlines and reports when the Department of Health and Human Services issued a clarifying statement attributed to Murthy in response to all the hyped media.

*“Marijuana policy -- and all public health policies -- should be driven by science. I believe that marijuana should be subjected to the same, rigorous clinical trials and scientific scrutiny that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) applies to all new medications. The Federal Government has and continues to fund research on possible health benefits of marijuana and its components. While clinical trials for certain components of marijuana appear promising for some medical conditions, neither the FDA nor the Institute of Medicine have found smoked marijuana to meet the standards for safe and effective medicine for any condition to date.*

“We are thankful for this clarifying statement from the DHHS and urge media to ensure that this information is broadly disseminated,” said Calvina Fay, Executive Director of Drug Free America Foundation and Save Our Society From Drugs. “Additionally, we urge authority figures such as Dr. Murthy to exercise greater care with public statements about this issue. It is undisputed that one or more compounds found in marijuana ‘can be helpful for some medical conditions.’ But, it is also clear that the crude weed as a whole, which contains many harmful substances, has not been scientifically shown to be effective medicine and smoking as a delivery system has been firmly rejected by all major medical and scientific groups. It is unfortunate that Dr. Murthy’s original comments were so unclear and did not include the fact that neither the Food and Drug Administration nor the Institute of Medicine have found smoked marijuana to meet the standards for safe and effective medicine for any condition,” continued Fay.

“Regular use of marijuana is robbing our youth of their IQ points, memory and in some cases, their mental health, and any policies that would increase access and availability of a harmful addictive substance should be driven by science not anecdotal evidence. We need public officials and medical experts to be very clear about the science when they speak on the issue so as not to add to the public’s confusion,” concluded Fay.

If you would like to set up an interview about this issue with Calvina Fay or other experts please contact Lana Beck at (727) 828-0211 ext. 102 or (727) 403-7571.

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*Drug Free America Foundation, Inc. is a national and international drug policy organization promoting effective and sound drug policies, education and prevention. [www.dfaf.org](http://www.dfaf.org).*