Dear Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and Court Managers,

I am writing to you as a concerned member of the public in regard to a severe lack of education and training (throughout the police and judicial system) in regard to the legislative change that took place on the 1st November 2018 in which new provisions, The Misuse of Drugs (Amendments) (Cannabis and Licence Fees) (England, Wales and Scotland) Regulations 2018, (“the 2018 Regulations”) came into force to allow cannabis based products for medicinal use (CBPM’s) to be legally prescribed.

A Home Office circular was disseminated to all police forces on the 1st November 2018: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/753366/Medicinal_Cannabis_-_Home_Office_Circular_2018_FINAL.pdf>

5 years on and there are in excess of 30,000 patients prescribed medical cannabis for a range of medical conditions and it is lawful for these patients to possess and use their medication when required and as directed by their specialist consultant.

As with other prescribed controlled drugs outlined within Section 5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988, patients are legally entitled to drive a motor vehicle and have a statutory medical defence to exceed the specified limit as per S.5A (3) RTA 1988 so long as they follow their consultant’s guidance.

There have been increasing numbers of incidents across the UK where police officers refuse to believe that cannabis can be legally prescribed, possessed and used, alongside patients being stopped by police both on the street and in their motor vehicle, the evidence of prescription being ignored and patients being unlawfully arrested for possession and/or driving offences.

In some recent cases, patient’s homes have been raided by police based on inaccurate intelligence.

On many occasions, these patients are refused access to their medication whilst in custody and following release from custody.

Furthermore, it has been identified that duty solicitors, the CPS and many Judges (both Magistrates and Crown) are also unaware of the legalities of CBPM’s and this is leading to professional negligence, wrongful charges and biased trials.

This unacceptable situation across the board is causing severe harms to law abiding medical patients (often whom are disabled and vulnerable) due entirely to ignorance of the law, stigma and discrimination simply because their prescribed medication is cannabis (prescription discrimination phenomena).

It is your responsibility and duty to ensure the safety of the public and to ensure that justice and the public interest are upheld.

I therefore request that the attached **‘Prescribed cannabis medicines and driving guidance for patients’** document (which has a QR code on pg.4 – leading to the evidence pack for police and courts entitled ‘Prescribed cannabis medicines – possession, use and driving guidance for police’) is disseminated to all staff under your authority so as to mitigate the harms and injustices outlined above.

I look forward to your reply and confirmation that your staff and all relevant persons have been informed and updated.

Your sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Contact details – including postcode]