

# CHARACTERISTICS OF CANNABIS-BASED CONSUMER HEALTH PRODUCTS USERS IN COMMUNITY PHARMACIES IN PORTUGAL

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## Background

**Cannabis-based consumer health products (CB-CHP)**, including dietary supplements and cosmetics, have gained increasing prominence in Portugal's community pharmacies.

At the time of this study, a range of non-prescription products containing cannabis derivatives were available in pharmacies, including dietary supplements and cosmetics.



Despite their widespread use, little was known regarding the profile of individuals purchasing these products and their consumption patterns.

## Objetives

This survey aimed to characterize pharmacy customers who purchased a CB-CHP in terms of demographic characteristics, purchase behaviour, and preferences regarding cannabis-based products.

## Methods

### » Cross-sectional survey

» **Multicentre:** conducted in a pool of Portuguese community pharmacies affiliated with the National Association of Pharmacies (ANF).

### Population

Users of CB-CHP that had cannabis derivatives in its formulation and were commercialized in the community pharmacies.

### Data collection process

The questionnaire was integrated in the pharmacy software (SIFARMA®) and was triggered by the dispense of a CB-CHP. The pharmacist filled in the questionnaire through patient interview. Data was collected on:

- Demographic characteristics (sex, age and region)
- Purchase behaviour (purchased product, purchase motivator, healthcare setting if medical prescriber, and intended use for the product)
- Preferred formulation for a product with the same intended use

## Results

Data was collected from August 21<sup>st</sup> to October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.

### Participants



**129**  
Community pharmacies



**429**  
CB-CHP users responded to the questionnaire

### Demographic characteristics



**59.4%**  
Female



**59.3**  
(mean age; SD=16.6)



**81.6%**  
were inquired in pharmacies located on urban areas

### Purchase behaviour

#### Purchase motivator

<b>Pharmacist</b>	<b>63.4%</b>
Friend/family	15.2%
Self-initiative	12.1%
Medical Doctor	4.9%

#### Consultation setting

[If "Medical Doctor Recommendation"] (n=21)

Public	Private
<b>38.1%</b>	<b>61.9%</b>

#### Health need



**91.6%**  
reported at least one pain-related disorder



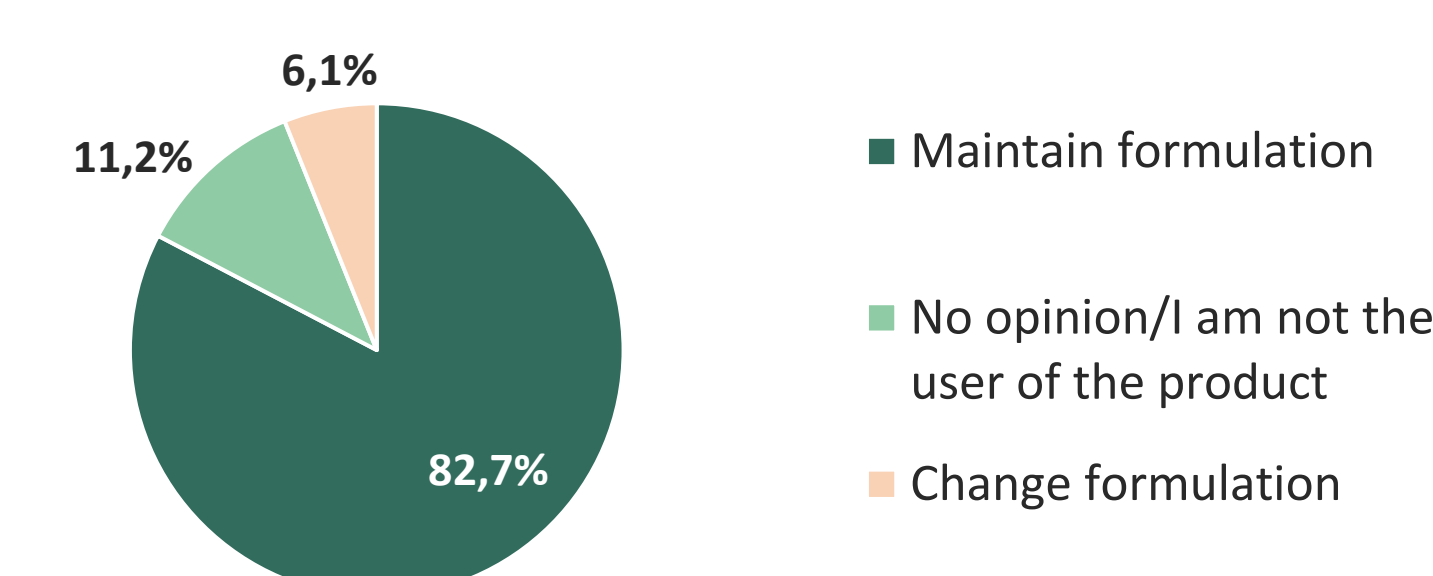
**78.3%**  
Musculoskeletal pain



**19.6%**  
Chronic pain

TOP6 most frequently purchased products were **creams or ointments**

**Formulation preference (n=428\*)**  
When asked if they would keep the CB-CHP formulation that were currently using, for the same health need:



\* 1 first-time user excluded

## Conclusions

CB-CHP users were mostly female of older age living in urban areas. The products were purchased mainly for pain relief, following a pharmacist recommendation. A small proportion purchased the product per medical doctor recommendation. Understanding the characteristics of cannabis-based products users is essential to generate meaningful health outcomes and support evidence-based decision-making and policy development.

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