Clarifying regulatory options: Defining regulatory models for recreational cannabis retail

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Introduction / Issues: The increasing global attention to legalizing non-medical cannabis warrants a discussion of current terms and definitions. This paper aims to (i) review the language used to describe regulatory models and options, and ii) propose a consistent terminology that can be applied across multiple substance/regulatory settings.

Method / Approach: Review of peer-review and grey literature on the definition and meaning of different regulatory models of alcohol and other drug supply. Providing definitions and other potentially important aspects of terminology are included.

Key Findings: There are inconsistencies in terminology used to describe regulatory models, and the terms used often lack specificity. Definitions for monopoly, not-for-profit and for-profit licenses at the production, distribution and retail point are provided.

Discussion and Conclusions: Although terms for types of regulation of addictive substances are frequently discussed definitional ambiguities exist. Greater care of terminology by researchers and policymakers can improve clarity.