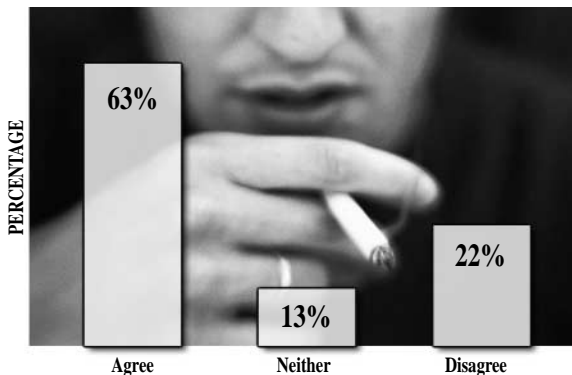


Edmontonians' poll station

By Linda Banister

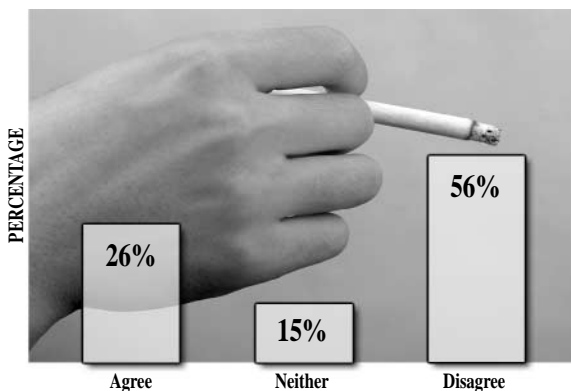
It is an ongoing controversial topic whether marijuana should be legalized for personal or medicinal use. This month's Poll Station looks at Edmontonians' attitudes toward this topic.

SHOULD MARIJUANA BE LEGALIZED FOR MEDICINAL USE?



Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that marijuana should be legalized for medicinal use (41% strongly, 22% somewhat). Almost one quarter of respondents (22%) disagreed (15% strongly, 7% somewhat) while 13 percent neither agreed nor disagreed and 2 percent did not know.

SHOULD MARIJUANA BE LEGALIZED FOR PERSONAL USE?



Just over one quarter (26%) of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that marijuana should be legalized for personal use (11% strongly, 15% somewhat). Over half of respondents (56%) stated they disagreed (45% strongly, 11% somewhat) with 15 percent neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 3 percent that did not know.

Of those respondents that agreed marijuana should be legalized for personal use, 56.1 percent felt that

the legal age to obtain marijuana should be 18 years old. Approximately seven percent (7.3%) felt it should be lower than 18, and just over one third (34.1%) felt that it should be higher than 18, with 24.4 percent who felt the legal age should be 21 years old.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES TO LEGALIZING MARIJUANA?

Thirty percent (30%) of respondents felt that there are no advantages to the legalization of marijuana. Medicinal purposes (24%) and fewer resources being wasted in the judicial system (17%) were cited as advantages, along with the government benefiting from the additional tax money (13%) and increased regulation (5%). An additional 5 percent of respondents felt it would be an advantage to decriminalize marijuana, 2 percent thought it would reduce the crime rate, and 6 percent did not know any advantages.

WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES TO LEGALIZING MARIJUANA?

When asked about the disadvantages of legalizing marijuana, 19 percent of respondents felt there would be a higher chance of overuse, while 14 percent thought that it would lead people to try stronger drugs as well as to smoke and drink more. Nine percent (9%) felt that it would become too accessible for children, (11%) felt that there are no disadvantages to legalizing marijuana. Nine percent (9%) said it is an unhealthy substance; 8 percent were concerned there will be more impaired driving; and 6 percent felt it will affect people's actions, social skills, work ethics, and motivation. Further, 5 percent felt it would become too accessible, with another 5 percent suggesting that more people would try and use marijuana if legalized.

The *Edmontonians* Poll Station surveyed 100 city of Edmonton residents on this topic and while the results of the research are not statistically reliable, they do provide a qualitative indication of what local business is thinking. ✓



Linda Banister is a certified management consultant and the owner of Banister Research & Consulting Inc., a full service provider of market research and program evaluation services.

If you have a question you would like included in the Edmontonians Poll, contact Linda at 780.451.4444 or e-mail at research@banister.ab.ca. For further information on the firm visit www.banister.ab.ca.