

# Research and Product-Lane Explainer



How medical and therapeutic pathways differ from general adult-use commerce.

Medical Access + Coverage • Audience: Public / Staff / Partner • Draft v2.1 • whole-plant framework

**What this resource does:** Shows why research strategy and product-lane clarity must be built together if WRCL wants a serious medical-access outcome.

## Why lanes matter

Cannabis policy often becomes confused because people use one word to describe several different product realities. WRCL's whole-plant framework only works if the product lanes are clear enough that research expectations, claims rules, and oversight pathways match the actual use case.

Lane	What it is for	Evidence/claims standard	Best-fit oversight logic
Adult-use	General legal adult use.	No therapeutic claims; follow consumer-protection standards.	Adult-use consumer products framework.
Medical/therapeutic	Products created to diagnose, treat, reduce, or control disease or symptoms based on medical reasoning.	Higher evidence threshold; considerations for clinician and patient use.	Medical and drug-related pathways regulated by HHS/FDA and associated payor policies.
Industrial hemp	Uses in agriculture, food, feed, or manufacturing.	No drug-claim standard applies unless claims are made.	Agriculture, food/feed, or industrial framework.
Cosmetic / wellness products	Products making unsubstantiated presentation claims.	Cannot make illegal disease claims.	Consumer product regulations with clear advertising and labeling restrictions.

## Research implications

- If WRCL wants medical access and reimbursement, it must support evidence that aligns with the medical pathway rather than relying solely on general adult-use experience.
- When products are marketed with therapeutic claims, the claims and supporting evidence need to shift.
- If the product is a seed-derived food ingredient or industrial material, the medical-evidence question might be irrelevant.
- Clarity in policy becomes easier when the product pathway is defined from the beginning.

## Bottom line

Whole-plant legality eliminates the conflicting legal basis. Product categories then specify which evidence, claims, coverage, and oversight standards are applicable.

## Selected source basis

**FDA regulation of Cannabis and cannabis-derived products** — Current FDA baseline for THC/CBD in foods, supplements, cosmetics, and approved drugs. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/fda-regulation-cannabis-and-cannabis-derived-products-including-cannabidiol-cbd>

**FDA and Cannabis: research and drug approval process** — Current FDA baseline on clinical research and drug approval. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/fda-and-cannabis-research-and-drug-approval-process>

**CMS Medicare Part D Manual, Chapter 6** — Current Part D coverage rules for prescription drugs used for medically accepted indications. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/prescription-drug-coverage/prescriptiondrugcovcontra/downloads/part-d-benefits-manual-chapter-6.pdf>

**NCI PDQ: Cannabis and Cannabinoids** — Current NCI summary of evidence for cancer-related symptom use.  
<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/cam/hp/cannabis-pdq>