

Marijuana in the Workplace: it's about timely impairment detection

Real-time impairment detection is needed to address increasing numbers of positive random and post-accident marijuana drug tests

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA, USA, June 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With 38 states having legalized [marijuana](#) for medicinal or recreational use by May 1, 2023, and some 35-55 million Americans reporting using marijuana two or more times per month (Ogletree Deakins May 30, 2023), it has long been expected that higher rates of positive random and post-accident tests in the workplace would follow.



Last month, Quest Diagnostics reported that in a 10-year timeframe of 2012 to 2022, the “post-accident Marijuana positivity increased 204.2%” as compared to the prior 10 years. The use of intoxicating cannabis products can have a major impact on safety at work and has been proven to slow reaction time, impact memory and impair skills essential to driving. The Quest data provide compelling evidence that increased use of cannabis products by employees can contribute to greater risk for injuries in the workplace.”

Zxerex Corporation is a neuroscience company that was founded to mitigate workplace risk using real-time, rapid identification of [impairment](#) arising from drugs (such as marijuana and [opioids](#)) and workplace fatigue.

According to Dr. Richard Besserman, the company’s Chief Science Officer and co-founder, “the core science and patented technology were developed at Arizona State University and the Barrow Neurological Institute (Common Spirit). The Zxerex team of scientists recognized the toxicology of marijuana and its effect on the brain to focus on the development of rapid, accurate, real-time impairment screening tests to manage workplace risk. The company participated in human subject trials marijuana and opioids were conducted at major medical

research centers resulting in novel findings biosignatures that Zxerex uses to rapidly identify temporary neurologic impairment.” To further the science, the company applied machine learning and AI to enhance the accuracy of screening. Its scientists are working with researchers at Johns Hopkins to develop a biosignature of marijuana addiction (CUD).

Zxerex believes that the addition of an "impairment management" to a workplace safety program that delivers real-time impairment screening, is critical given the following key points:

- Marijuana’s active ingredient, THC remains in body fat for many days or weeks after use.
- This presence of THC in the body can cause a positive urine or saliva test result long after the individual is no longer impaired.
- Positive post-accident urine tests negatively affect liability concerns.
- Positive post-accident or random urine or saliva tests at companies with zero-tolerance policies can lead to the loss of skilled employees.
- As with alcohol use, mitigating the impact of risky behavior is an additional worthwhile goal.

Given its commitment to impairment management, Zxerex has developed an online training module for managers and supervisors to help them to detect and interact with impaired workers. The company recommends frequent screening of employees in safety-sensitive positions. When combined with an employer’s in-house safety program, IMPAIR-ID powered by Zxerex™ performed frequently at the start of a shift can help to reduce accident and injury rates, lower absenteeism, and improve productivity.

Source:

Quest Diagnostics: <https://newsroom.questdiagnostics.com/2023-05-18-Post-Accident-Workforce-Drug-Positivity-for-Marijuana-Reached-25-Year-High-in-2022,-Quest-Diagnostics-Drug-Testing-Index-Analysis-Finds>

Ogletree Deakins: <https://ogletree.com/insights/majority-of-states-have-legalized-marijuana-but-oshas-post-incident-drug-testing-guidance-hasnt-changed/>

Zxerex: <https://www.zxerex.com>

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