

BACKGROUND

- During menopause, most women will experience one or more symptoms. Symptoms include: vasomotor or urogenital symptoms, mood changes, sleep disturbances, weight gain, muscle and joint aches.
- Clinically, we have anecdotal reports of women using cannabis for symptom management
- Use has increased in Canada since legalization of recreational cannabis use in 2018
- Current clinical guidelines recommend medical cannabinoids in certain pain types, spasticity, or chemo-induced nausea or vomiting.
- Lack of evidence in literature on cannabis used for menopause symptoms

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To characterize prior and current use of cannabis in menopausal women.
- (2) To characterize perceptions of cannabis used for medical purposes in women experiencing menopause.

METHODS

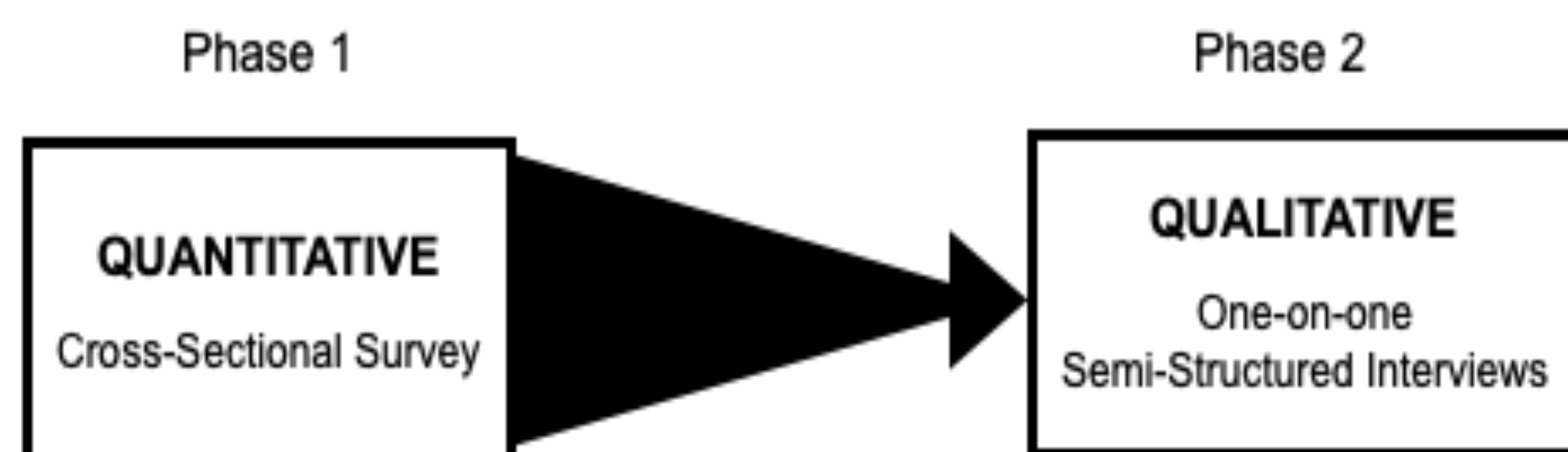


Figure 1. Mixed Methods Research Design

Phase 1: Cross-sectional, web-based survey in Qualtrics

- Questions were investigator-driven, piloted in sample of women
- English-only
- Survey open from October 2020 to December 2020.
- *Inclusion Criteria* – women, aged 35 and over, living in Alberta

Recruitment

- Social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

Analysis

- Descriptive statistics to describe sample and frequencies

RESULTS

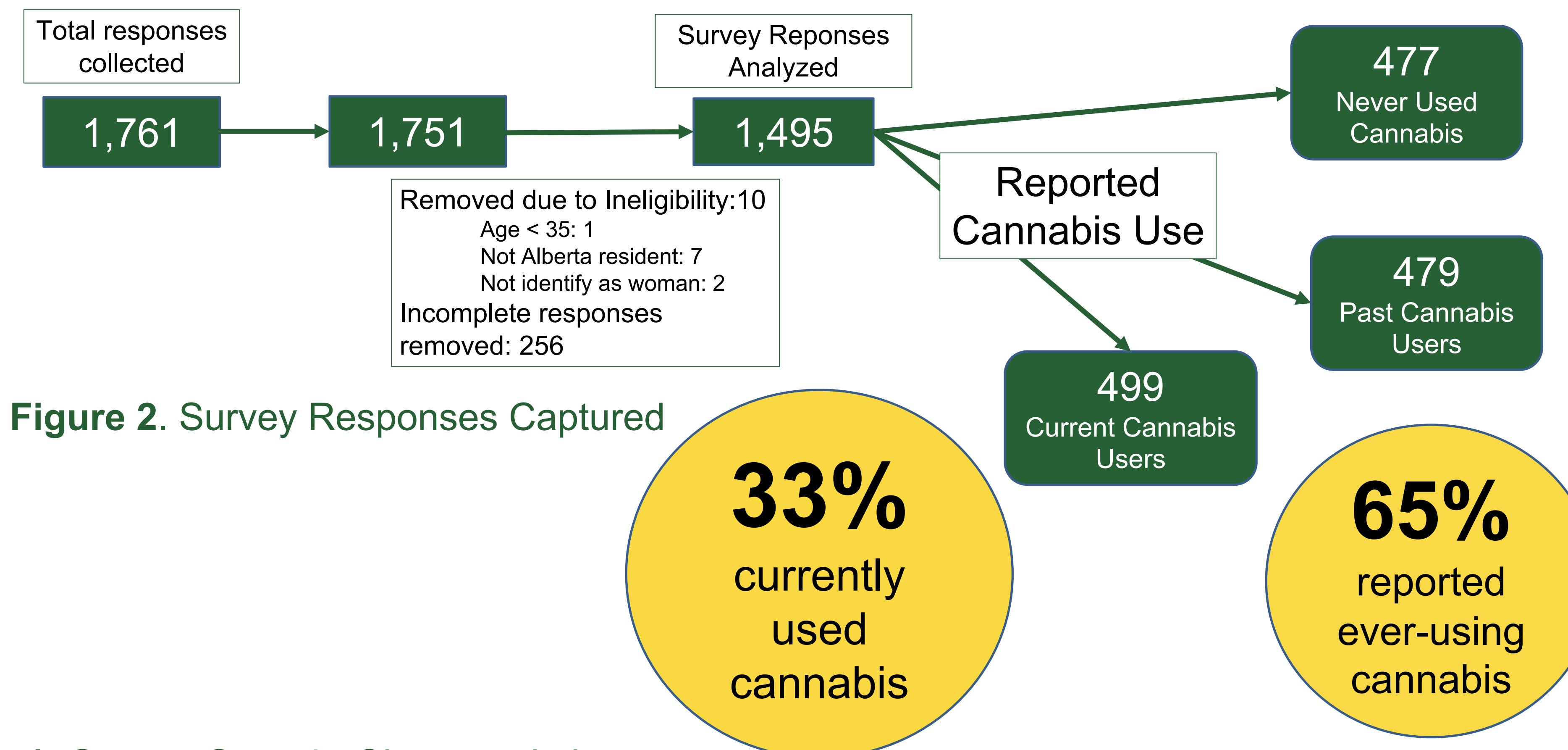


Figure 2. Survey Responses Captured

Table 1. Survey Sample Characteristics

| Variable | No. of Respondents (n=1,495) |
|--|------------------------------|
| Age (Median, IQR) | 49.0 (43.0-55.0) |
| Ethnicity (%) | |
| White | 1379 (92.2) |
| Menopause Status (%) | |
| Pre-menopause | 272 (18.2) |
| Perimenopause | 486 (32.5) |
| Post-menopause | 522 (34.9) |
| Hysterectomy (%) | 187 (12.5) |
| Bilateral Oophorectomy (%) | 64 (4.3) |
| Menopause Symptoms* (%) | |
| Difficulty sleeping | 970 (64.9) |
| Difficulty concentrating | 730 (48.8) |
| Anxiety | 724 (48.4) |
| Low libido | 691 (46.2) |
| Irritability | 686 (45.9) |
| Medications for Menopause** (%) | |
| Antidepressants | 300 (20.1) |
| Hormone Therapy | 142 (9.5) |
| None | 924 (61.8) |
| Cigarette Smokers (%) | 119 (8.0) |
| Education Level (%) | |
| High school or less | 150 (10.0) |
| Post-Secondary | 1003 (67.1) |
| Graduate-level | 304 (20.3) |
| Region of Alberta (%) | |
| Edmonton area | 649 (43.4) |
| Calgary area | 457 (30.6) |
| Northern Alberta | 110 (7.4) |
| Central Alberta | 129 (8.6) |
| Southern Alberta | 138 (9.2) |

*Included Top 5 reported symptoms of menopause

**Included Top 3 responses selected for Medications in Menopause

Table 2. Current Cannabis User Characteristics

| Variable | Current Users (n=499) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Reason for Use (%) | |
| Both | 205 (41.1) |
| Medical | 169 (33.9) |
| Recreational | 119 (23.9) |
| Medically Prescribed (%) | 113 (22.7) |
| Cannabis Form (%) | |
| Edibles | 258 (51.7) |
| Oils | 236 (47.3) |
| Smoked | 205 (41.1) |
| Vaped | 129 (25.9) |
| Capsules | 81 (16.2) |
| Other | 25 (5.0) |
| Cannabis Type (%) | |
| Balanced CBD/THC | 289 (57.9) |
| High THC | 180 (36.1) |
| High CBD | 173 (34.7) |
| Don't Know | 30 (6.0) |
| Duration of Use (%) | |
| Less than 1 year | 132 (26.5) |
| 1-2 years | 105 (21.0) |
| Over 2 years | 258 (51.7) |
| Frequency of Use (%) | |
| Only as needed | 165 (33.1) |
| Once daily | 98 (19.6) |
| More than once daily | 115 (23.0) |
| Recreationally only | 60 (12.0) |
| For Symptoms (%)* | |
| Difficulty sleeping | 325 (65.1) |
| Anxiety | 226 (45.3) |
| Muscle/Joint Aches | 166 (33.3) |
| Irritability | 142 (28.5) |
| Depression | 124 (24.9) |

*Showing Top 5 Symptoms from the following: hot flashes, night sweats, difficulty sleeping, depression, irritability, mood swings, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, muscle/joint aching, vaginal itching/dryness, painful intercourse, low libido, other

When women were asked about:

Interest in using cannabis for menopause symptoms

39% said "Yes"

Interest in learning about cannabis for menopause symptoms

51% said "Yes"

Sources of Information

Most used:

- Internet Searches (46%)
- Family or Friends (34%)
- Cannabis stores (23%)

Most desired:

- Physician (48%)
- Medical Cannabis Clinic (50%)
- Pharmacist (40%)

Want to know more about:

- Cannabis indications (65%)
- Type of cannabis (47%)
- Drug interactions (42%)

CONCLUSION

- Midlife women are using cannabis and for symptoms overlapping with menopause
- Further survey analysis will compare demographic and clinical characteristics between current cannabis users and non-users.
- Phase 2 to provide insight to experiences of women using cannabis for medical purposes

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