

The rise of private cannabis clinics in the UK reflects growing patient demand and ongoing NHS funding gaps for medicinal cannabis treatments. Yet navigating this expanding sector can be tricky. Patients often face unclear pricing, inconsistent prescribing standards, and clinics making broad marketing claims that don't always stand up under scrutiny.

This is where using a **clinic directory** can make a real difference. By helping you **shortlist providers** and **compare marketing claims** transparently, these directories can support informed decisions—especially when considering features like video consultations and remote prescribing services that are increasingly common but tightly regulated.

Legality vs Real-World Access: Understanding the UK Medicinal Cannabis Landscape

Medicinal cannabis was legalised in the UK in November 2018, but legal does not automatically mean widely accessible. The NHS maintains strict guidelines and very limited funding, resulting in a significant **NHS funding gap**. This gap is why many patients turn to the private market where cannabis clinics operate, offering cannabis-based products on prescription.

However, the private market reality means patients must navigate:

- Variable access depending on clinic policies and prescribers' expertise
- Out-of-pocket costs that are not standardised
- A limited number of clinicians authorised and qualified to prescribe cannabis medicines
- Regulation that differs across the UK's nations

Clinic directories can help unravel some of this complexity by providing up-to-date, practical information on private options available to patients.

Who Can Prescribe Cannabis-Based Products and Why It Matters

Only specially qualified doctors registered on the GMC Specialist Register are permitted to prescribe medicinal cannabis in the UK. This includes consultants, often in pain medicine, neurology, psychiatry or palliative care. This requirement aims to ensure appropriate clinical expertise because cannabis-based products for medicinal use (CBPMs) are not standard first-line therapies and come with unique assessment and monitoring needs.

Many clinic directories verify which prescribers are on the GMC Specialist Register. This differentiates reputable clinics from those whose marketing may not clearly stress the importance of specialist expertise.

The Role of Remote Prescribing and Video Consultations

The use of **video consultations** has surged, making specialist advice more accessible without the need to travel long distances. Alongside this, **remote prescribing** allows prescriptions to be issued following online assessments. However, these practices come with regulatory oversight.

In England, private clinics must declare their provision of remote prescribing services to the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This is a key quality marker to watch for when using a clinic directory:

- Has the clinic registered their remote services with the CQC?
- Are video consultations carried out by qualified prescribers with clear protocols?

- Is follow-up care clearly detailed, including prescription renewal policies?

Directories that list this information transparently empower patients to make safer choices.



How Clinic Directories Help You Build a Shortlist and Compare Marketing Claims

Many patients report frustration with clinics that make *overconfident claims about evidence* or use *wellness language* that blurs lines between healthcare and lifestyle products. Clinic directories cut through this by providing standardised information on:

- **Consultation types** — face-to-face, video, telephone
- **Pricing transparency** — including consultation prices and prescription costs
- **Prescribing credentials** — confirming prescribers' GMC registration and specialisation
- **Regulatory registrations** — CQC status, which is critical in England
- **Clinic locations and remote service availability**

Common Mistake: No Consultation or Prescription Prices Stated

One of the most frequent pitfalls patients face is clinics that do not clearly state their consultation or prescription charges upfront. This lack of transparency can lead to unexpected costs down the line, especially since medicinal cannabis prescriptions can be expensive and may require ongoing follow-up appointments.

Quality clinic directories demand clear pricing information from listed clinics, helping you:

- Avoid hidden fees
- Plan your budget realistically
- Compare options based on cost-effectiveness, not just marketing allure

Regulation and Oversight: What Patients Need to Know

Regulation varies across the UK:



Nation Regulatory Body Remote Prescribing Declaration Implications for Patients England Care Quality Commission (CQC) Mandatory declaration of remote prescribing services Patients can check CQC ratings and registration to ensure safety Scotland Healthcare Improvement Scotland No formal remote prescribing registry currently Patients should confirm clinic's regulatory status and prescriber credentials Wales Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) No remote prescribing declaration required Scrutiny of clinic transparency is advisable Northern Ireland Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) Similar to Wales and Scotland, no formal remote prescribing register Patient vigilance on clinic information is crucial <https://todaynews.co.uk/2026/08/10/inside-the-uks-private-medical-cannabis-clinics-how-the-sector-actually-works/>

Clinic directories often focus on England's CQC-regulated market but reputable ones include disclaimers for other UK nations. This helps patients separate *legality* from actual *availability* and regulation.

Checklist: Using a Clinic Directory Effectively

1. **Check prescriber credentials:** Ensure doctors are on the GMC Specialist Register for relevant specialities.
2. **Confirm regulatory registration:** For clinics in England, verify CQC listing and remote prescribing declarations.
3. **Review consultation types:** Does the clinic offer video consultations? Are these appropriately supported?
4. **Compare transparent pricing:** Look for clear signs of consultation and prescription costs.
5. **Look beyond marketing:** Match clinic claims against patient reviews and independent information.
6. **Understand follow-up policies:** Are repeat prescriptions and monitoring included or charged separately?
7. **Consider geography and accessibility:** Even with remote services, practical factors like delivery of medication matter.

Final Thoughts

Choosing a cannabis clinic in the UK demands careful consideration amid a market still finding its feet. Clinic directories are invaluable tools, offering a practical way to **shortlist providers** and **compare marketing claims** transparently. They particularly shine when it comes to highlighting key decision points like regulatory compliance,

prescriber expertise, pricing transparency, and the growing use of video consultations and remote prescribing services.

By using a trusted clinic directory, patients can reduce risk, save time, and spend smarter—moving beyond hype to make choices based on facts and real-world practice.