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New player in the medical cannabis market: Cantourage challenges dronabinol monopoly

Seasoned founders break therapy monopoly in Germany and allow more patients to benefit from treatment

Since 15 April 2020, pharmacies have been able to purchase the active ingredient dronabinol (also known as tetrahydrocannabinol or THC) directly from Cantourage – the new supplier of dronabinol on the medical cannabis market. Cantourage is therefore also helping to improve the supply situation in times of corona. Cantourage has its own exclusive production relationship with Israeli cannabis producer BOL (Breath of Life) Pharma for dronabinol, which pharmacies use to make patient-specific drugs. Cantourage was founded by the former founders of Pedanios, Dr. Florian Holzapfel and Patrick Hoffmann, together with Norman Ruchholtz. In the past, they developed Pedanios into the European market leader for cannabis flowers. At Cantourage, they are now continuing the success story of medical cannabis in Germany.

The medical cannabis market in Germany is growing rapidly: It is expected that one million patients will be treated with medical cannabis in 2024*. Based on past developments, the sales volume for dronabinol will continue to multiply over the coming years. Demand for dronabinol in the German market has so far been met by just one manufacturer. Cantourage will break this monopoly and strengthen the supply situation in times of corona. The founding team of the new dronabinol supplier includes pioneers of the German medical cannabis market: Pedanios founders Dr. Florian Holzapfel and Patrick Hoffmann.

Dronabinol API Cantourage as drops or capsules for many indications

The active ingredient 'Dronabinol API Cantourage' has been available for pharmacies to order directly from Cantourage since 15 April 2020. Dronabinol API Cantourage is a pure active ingredient. Pharmacies process it into either drops or capsules for patients according to the DAC monograph. Dronabinol is therefore easier and more targeted to dose than cannabis flowers and is easy for patients to take.

Dronabinol exclusively from Israel by BOL Pharma

Dronabinol API Cantourage is produced by BOL Pharma exclusively for Cantourage on a job contract basis. BOL Pharma is by far the largest producer of medical cannabis in Israel and a strategic partner of Cantourage. The dronabinol produced for Cantourage is the first commercial export to the EU from Israel, which is considered a pioneer in medical cannabis: Israel has been conducting extensive research in the field of medical cannabis for several decades. It has been approved for medical purposes since 1992. Up to now, medical cannabis in Germany came exclusively from Germany, Canada, the Netherlands and Portugal.

Tamir Gedo, CEO of BOL Pharma, is excited about entering the European market with Cantourage: „We are the market leader in Israel. The European market entry is the next logical step in our internationalization strategy. With Cantourage, we have found the ideal partner because we have known each other for several years and we are convinced by the team and its know-how“.

First Pedanios, then Aurora, now Cantourage: the founding story

Dr. Florian Holzapfel and Patrick Hoffmann founded Pedanios in 2015, the first company in Germany to specialize in the distribution of medical cannabis. Within less than a year, Pedanios covered 80 percent of the entire market for medical cannabis flowers. In 2017, they sold Pedanios to the listed Canadian company Aurora, one of the world's largest producers of medical cannabis. Now, they are continuing to shape the medical cannabis market in Germany with Cantourage. On board once again is Think.Health Ventures, which already financed Pedanios as a venture capitalist and can draw on extensive experience in the healthcare environment.

Dr. Florian Holzapfel sees the company as a think tank for cannabis: *„Breaking the dronabinol monopoly is our first step towards creating added value for patients, pharmacists and health insurance companies. Over the coming months, we will continue to pursue disruptive approaches.“* Cantourage extends the variety of cannabis therapies and makes them affordable. In the future, more people will be able to benefit from the positive effects of treatment with medical cannabis who are entitled to it. Together with suppliers, pharmacists and doctors, Cantourage sees itself as a community that pursues the well-being of patients – with the help of medical cannabis.

*(Source: Prohibition Partners 2019)

About Cantourage

Cantourage is a new player in the medical cannabis market in Germany. The company sees itself as a think tank that continues to shape the medical cannabis market in Germany and Europe with new ideas and concepts. Cantourage was founded in 2019 by Norman Ruchholtz, Dr. Florian Holzapfel and Patrick Hoffmann. Their goal is to help patients and provide access to medical cannabis therapy to as many people as possible.

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