



mcua

Medical Cannabis Users Association of Australia

[Website](#)

[Email](#)

06.12.16 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MCUA SLAMS GOVT'S WAR ON PATIENTS

The 12000 members of the Medical Cannabis Users Association of Australia Inc (MCUA) condemn the actions of NSW Police in seizing life-saving cannabis in a raid on the Church of Ubuntu in Newcastle on December 1. They are calling on all Australian Governments to do more to ensure sick Australians have IMMEDIATE LEGAL access to medicinal cannabis.

“The media hype and political spin about cannabis being “legal” is very misleading,” says MCUA secretary Mrs Deb Lynch who treats herself with cannabis for a rare autoimmune disease and relies on Ubuntu when her supply is depleted.

Health Minister Ley claims that the new legislation was “... very much a measure for the patients....their advice, their input, their passion and their advocacy has brought this to the attention of the Australian parliament” While the legislation allows import via the Special Access Scheme; the new regulation denies cannabis seeking patients access via the much less stringent Category A form, forcing terminally ill patients to wait for much longer periods.

The minister said her reason for this was that cannabis needs a more “adequate level of regulatory oversight and safeguards to the public.”

This was considered necessary despite there never having been a death from its use by medically unqualified Aussies who have been treating themselves and others for decades. By denying access under Cat A, she has ultimately condemned terminally ill patients to face their death sentence devoid of hope and filled with mental anguish

The 'legitimate' processes that has been established are arduous and cost prohibitive. There is no legal supply available locally and this is precisely the reason that many sick Australians are continuing to rely on the black market and organisations such as Ubuntu to meet their needs.

"MCUA members see this as a ridiculous situation. Especially when you consider the increased demands this places on Internationally registered suppliers, who are restricted in the amounts they can hold and export; and who may not be able to meet the precise needs of patients to treat themselves with illness specific strains," said Mrs Lynch.

A large number of MCUA members are currently trying to access medicinal cannabis via the new government pathway. They are reporting that they are unable to find a doctor who is willing to prescribe or their knowledge on cannabis is limited to propaganda. Some are finding that their doctors who support cannabis therapeutics are reluctant to devote the time necessary to wade through substantial paperwork; and others have expressed reluctance to sign a waiver accepting full responsibility for any adverse consequences of the treatment.

"Its like a scene out of Yes Minister," said MCUA President, Ms Gail Hester. "Especially when we have Dr Bastian Seidel the president of the RACGPs saying: GPs are seeing a lot of patients coming in asking for medical cannabis as an option for treatment. A lot say they are consuming amounts already and it's great for their back pain - it's quite a significant problem."

NSW Police were aware that Ubuntu were producing medicinal cannabis and that many people, including children, were relying on that medicine. Ubuntu were assisting nearly 2,000 patients every day. Australian government regulations have assisted one. Access time, 18 months.

For many MCUA members, time is not on their side. The sick are choosing not to wait for politics to catch up leaving them with little choice but to keep using the illicit market at the risk of their legal health.

But many agree the benefits far outweigh the risk and MCUA will continue to lobby for affordable and easy access for all who need it.

MCUA Spokesperson: Deb Lynch

[Email: deb.lynych@mcuainc.org.au](mailto:deb.lynych@mcuainc.org.au)

Mob: 043202040727