



mcua

MEDICAL CANNABIS USERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

FEB 2016

SUBMISSION TO

**The Advisory Committee on Medicines Scheduling (ACMS)
& The Advisory Committee Chemicals Scheduling (ACCS)**

Commenting on the proposal to enable appropriate access to medicinal cannabis products by creating new Schedule 8 entries for the substances listed for internal human therapeutic use; and Cannabis and THC would remain Schedule 9 substances....when not for human therapeutic use..

INTRODUCTION

The MCUA of Australia is an incorporated association representing over 10,000 Australian adults who are currently using or wanting access to cannabis medicine for themselves or their loved ones. The greater number of them are refugees from a broken health 'care' system that has run out of options for safe treatment for their terminal, baffling, hidden and rare illnesses.

Many have tried all manner of pharmaceutical preparations that have proven dangerous, leading to impairment and inability to function in the workplace or on the roads. Others have had allergic reactions to these chemically manufactured preparations causing devastating physical and mental side effects that substantially reduce their quality of life.

Conventional medicine has let them down and all are searching for alternatives. The majority are finding exceptional relief and extremely valuable therapy from illegal whole-plant cannabis extractions.

For them “appropriate access” is access to the strain best suited to their condition that is affordable, safe and reliable. This is a fundamental human right. To prosecute and punish people who are DISABLED by their conditions, for seeking relief from their ailments, is a crime against the humanity and discrimination against the disabled .

Now that the draft legislation has been tabled federally to change the Narcotics Act, MCUA members understand the reasons for this proposal and we also understand that our time is probably wasted in preparing this document, but 10,000 + members of the MCUA and the general public are the end STAKEHOLDERS in this issue and they want “appropriate access”.

MCUA does not support the amendments

Cannabis is not a poison and has no place being on the poison schedule.

History shows us that “prohibiting access” to it was the brain child of a US campaign to slur its reputation with the public because of vested financial interests in other places.

Prior to this, Cannabis was a respected medicine and doctors used it freely and often. It was included in many over the counter preparations and was trusted as being safe and effective.

WHAT changed?

The plant and its compounds remain the same. The law made it a poison.

Now its time for the lawmakers to undo the lies and deceit.



Antidotes. Empty stomach by emetic or gastric lavage. Stimulants, such as strong black coffee, frequently. Strychnine, $\frac{1}{4}$ gr., hypodermically. Keep patient warm. Artificial respiration may be necessary.

Toxic Effects. Doses of 2 grains or more, whether ingested or smoked, cause euphoria, mental confusion, hallucinations and motor excitement. The initial phase of inebriation is succeeded by irritability and somnolence, and after some hours by a comatose sleep. Toxic doses cause vertigo and collapse but serious poisoning is rare, as the margin between the effective and the fatal dose is wide. Addiction does not give rise to serious physical consequences and, except in severe cases, withdrawal symptoms are insignificant. Continued use of the drug may lead to mental deterioration but insanity is a rare sequel.

The physiological activity of the hemp-plant varies with the locality in which it is grown. The minimum fatal dose by the mouth of charas, ganjsh and bhung works out at 2000 mg., 8000 mg. and 10,000 mg. per kg. body weight respectively.—R. N. Chopra and G. S. Chopra, "The present position of hemp-drug addiction in India", *Indian med. Res. Mem.*, No. 31, July 1939, 1-119.

The minimum fatal dose by mouth is 2,000 – 10,000 mgs per kg of body weight. (RN Chopra)

CHOPRA, R. N.; CHOPRA, G. S.: The Present Position of Hemp-Drug Addiction in India (a pamphlet) Indian Medical Research Memorandum No. 31, Calcutta, 1939, pages 1-119

According to Francis L. Young Administrative Law Judge (DEA) Dated: SEP 6 1988

4. *Nearly all medicines have toxic, potentially lethal effects. But marijuana is not such a substance. There is no record in the extensive medical literature describing a proven, documented cannabis-induced fatality.*

5. *This is a remarkable statement. First, the record on marijuana encompasses 5,000 years of human experience. Second, marijuana is now used daily by enormous numbers of people throughout the world. Estimates suggest that from twenty million to fifty million Americans routinely, albeit illegally, smoke marijuana **without the benefit of direct medical supervision**. Yet, despite this long history of use and the extraordinarily high numbers of social smokers, there are simply **no credible medical reports to suggest that consuming marijuana has caused a single death**.*

15. *In strict medical terms marijuana is far safer than many foods we commonly consume. For example, eating ten raw potatoes can result in a toxic response. By comparison, it is physically impossible to eat enough marijuana to induce death.*

16. *Marijuana, in its natural form, is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man. By any measure of rational analysis marijuana can be safely used within a supervised routine of medical care.*

Dated: SEP 6 1988 <http://druglibrary.org/schaffer/library/studies/young/young4.html>

Its toxicity remains unaltered.

The toxicity of synthetically produced competition:

Many of our most commonly used drugs, from painkillers to antidepressants, are dangerous and are killing us off in large numbers, says a leading researcher visiting Australia next week.

Peter Gotzsche, a co-founder of the Cochrane Collaboration, the world's foremost body in assessing medical evidence, arrives in Australia on Monday for a whirlwind speaking tour warning Australians about their use of prescription medications. He estimates that 100,000 people in the United States alone die each year from the side-effects of correctly used drugs.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/health/peter-gotsche-founder-of-the-cochrane-collaboration-visits-australia-to-talk-about-dangers-of-prescription-drugs-20150204-136nqc.html#ixzz408mdq2H5>

"Few know that systematic reviews of hospital charts found that even properly prescribed drugs (aside from misprescribing, overdosing, or self-prescribing) cause about 1.9 million hospitalisations a year. Another 840,000 hospitalised patients are given drugs that cause serious adverse reactions for a total of 2.74 million serious adverse drug reactions. About 128,000 people die from drugs prescribed to them. This makes prescription drugs a major health risk, ranking 4th with stroke as a leading cause of death."

<http://ethics.harvard.edu/blog/new-prescription-drugs-major-health-risk-few-offsetting-advantages>

Number of hospitalisations due to cannabis?

Current use - In 2013, it was estimated about 6.6 million (or 35%) people aged 14 or older had used cannabis in their lifetime and about **1.9 million** (or 10.2%) had used cannabis in the previous 12 months. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129549848>

In 2014 there were **5254** cannabis related hospitalisations Australia wide.

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/alcohol-and-other-drugs/aodts/drug-related-hospitalisations/>

Number of deaths due to cannabis? Nil

What is appropriate access ?

1. it is access that is affordable and available to EVERYONE who can benefit from its use;
2. it is access to the raw fresh product and its preventative, as much as its curative properties;
3. it is access for all varieties that are condition specific and the entourage effect;
4. it is access to whole-plant cannabis and cannabis products without having to jump through bureaucratic hoops or unravel miles of the red tape;
5. is access to home growing which ensures patient safety, and a reliable ongoing supply; and knowing exactly what is being used in the whole process from growing to extraction;
6. it is going out into your own garden and picking leaves to put into your food without fear of being visited by police, having your medicine destroyed, and being fined and/or convicted.
7. it is access that allows patients to grow and share their crop with others suffering similar conditions via a compassionate network;
8. appropriate access is UNRESTRICTED access. Even in America cannabis is not available solely on prescription but on recommendation by a doctor.

The greatest concerns to current users of the natural product, is the **potential cost and quality** of any pharmaceutical/government controlled supply.

Users want reassurance that it will be the variety bred for, and most relevant for their condition. (eg 'Blue Cheese' for liver cancer). Research and anecdotal evidence is finding that different strains of cannabis provide the best relief for particular symptoms and conditions, so Sativex, Epidolix, CBD only and similar products are unlikely to benefit **every patient who currently benefits** (or could benefit) from appropriate access to the entourage effect of whole plant natural therapies.

Single cannabinoids or synthetic copies are incapable of the same results and are expensive to produce and buy.

Currently Sativex is not subsidised by the PBS; costs around \$800 month and is only available to MS patients. This puts it out of reach for those who most need it and who are probably on a disability pension. If it were subsidised it would cost the tax payer around \$794 per month, for something that can be grown for the cost of a tomato plant.

How many decades of expensive trials lay ahead for each condition that cannabis can treat, cure prevent and relieve NOW? We need to speed the process up.

Purchasing from the black market is also cost prohibitive. Home growing puts canna-meds well within the financial reach of every person who needs it.

People will continue to seek out and buy black market supplies regardless of any changes you might make to the scheduling 'detail' thus opening themselves up to black market profiteers and their unscrupulous practices such as using illegal, cancer causing plant growth regulators (PGRs). *Please see attached pdf file for details.*

People need safe and affordable access now. Home growing is the answer.

Any regulatory blockades should be kept for big pharmaceutical companies and applicants who would be selling to the public; while users who grow their own, should be free from user pays fees. It is our legislated right to have access to affordable, SAFE and effective medicine. And cannabis grown in the garden can achieve this without red tape and hoop jumping for people who are suffering or terminally ill with no other hope on the horizon.

Suggested alternatives

GRAPE MODEL

Treat Cannabis/Hemp like grapes,

You can grow as many grapes as you want, no license.

You can make as many of those grapes as you want into wine, no license.

You can share that wine with your friends and family, no license.

HOWEVER the moment you want to sell some of that wine you require a license and to show quality control and safety for human consumption.

This way the supply problem addressed and the tax on commercial sales will help balance the budget.

Remove all the natural cannabis products in this TGA proposal from the poison schedule altogether.

Re classify cannabis and cannabis products as a botanical ingredient within complimentary medicine. Governed by the manufacturing legalisation. It is an ingredient. It is a plant. It is non

toxic. It can be applied in many ways (ingest, vaporise, suppositories, pessaries, topical).

Keep the stringent rules for large scale operations and profit making concerns who will supply to the government. People who wish to grow and use should be able to do so at will. Restricted access and trials need to be in place for synthetic versions of cannabis because their safety and efficacy is UNKNOWN. Herbal products that have documented proof over 5000 yrs do not need trials or vigorous testing.

The anti cannabis campaigners say this would put our kids at risk of harm. Kids are always going to want to experiment with mind altering substances. Be it booze, prescription medication, street drugs, glue or cleaning products. Is it not best to have a healthy alternative available for them that. As with the other recreational drug (booze), parents need to educate themselves and their kids about its use.

5TH FEBRUARY 2016: HILLS teenagers are risking death in a bid to get a high from aerosol cans in a dangerous practice called "huffing". Hills Local Area Commander Supt Rob Critchlow said: "The practice of 'huffing' or inhaling volatile chemicals is so dangerous it is mind-boggling anyone would do it." ... seizures and blackouts, chest pains and irregular heartbeat....Abusers can get addicted and it can cause long-term brain damage.
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/national/teens-risk-death-huffing-cans-of-deodorant/news-story/c6a90e4afcd93938da37123d6f5dd27d>

Penalties should be removed for possession and cultivation and new laws put in place for prosecuting sellers to make a profit without adhering to legitimate business requirements and practices - eg ABN, growers licence or manufacturing licence, GST could be collected on recreational sales.

Most people these days are aware of the potential of cannabis medicine. MCUA is fielding increasing requests every day from desperate people clawing for access – many are afraid to try it for fear of prosecution. This is indeed a sad situation.

Every poll conducted in the media for the last 2 yrs has returned an average of 96% of the population agreeing that cannabis should be legal for medical use.

What do you see as the likely benefits or costs of this proposal ?

THERE ARE NO BENEFITS to the end stakeholders. It gives big business (pharmaceutical companies) a strangle hold on cannabis. It perpetuates the myth that cannabis is dangerous when in fact it is the most beneficial **food** on the planet.

The REAL COST in \$ terms of these restrictions will be to the taxpayers of this country who will continue to subsidise an aging population, the soaring cost of health services and PBS subsidies for drugs that don't work as well as cannabis. Full and free access to cannabis could save Medicare from going down the gurlger and save Australians from a US style of health care.

These costs could be wound back considerably in the future if cannabis and hemp seed foods were to be freely available NOW – the savings would be phenomenal with a few short years. Conditions like chronic pain; mental health; epilepsy; glaucoma; Parkinson's and Alzheimers; cancer; hepatitis C and autoimmune diseases can be treated with home grown cannabis. The savings on the PBS alone could pay the welfare budget!

Representatives from Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, GlaxoSmithKline, Roche, Novartis, AstraZeneca, Sanofi, Eli Lilly, and Merck Sharp & Dohne have all been requested to appear before the Senate inquiry... investigating corporate tax avoidance... suppliers of publicly subsidised medicines in Australia recorded sales of nearly \$5 billion last year but paid an average of just \$10 million each in company tax.

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/comment-and-analysis/big-pharma-bosses-front-up-to-senate-inquiry-into-corporate-tax-avoidance-20150701-gi2u7v.html>

The psychological and financial COST of the drug war on medical users would be eliminated. Arrests, loss of licenses, clogged up courts; cost of roadside drug testing - laboratory tests cost around \$800 each; kits \$50 and the estimated increase in road side testing is expected to increase to around 97,000 in the next year.

What other 'medication' is targeted like this by police? The fear of prosecution makes many users interrupt treatment (and relief from symptoms) in case they get "caught" - unlike prescribed medications that carry a warning about "not operating machinery" – but there is NO PENALTY for doing so. It is unfair, unjust and unreasonable and reeks of bias.

Medical users need access without fear of being prosecuted for their choice of health care. They are at the **mercy** of the LAW and discretion of police and currently there is NONE.

Re: "Cannabis and THC would remain Schedule 9 substances...when not for human therapeutic use..."

There is **NO BENEFIT** to this suggested proposal either.

Cannabis taken in any form works on our built-in endo-cannabinoid system which keeps the body in homeostasis, therefore all use is therapeutic. People use cannabis "recreationally" to "make them feel better" i.e. reduce stress, lift their mood or help induce sleep.

Our body hangs onto cannabis for a long time after "recreational" use, because our body recognises it as a useful substance and this is why it shows up long after use in roadside testing.

If cannabis were removed from the poison schedule altogether there would be HUGE advantages:

1. There would be no leakage into illicit market because there will be no "illicit" market
2. Tax could be collected on (only) recreational users
3. It would be a safer alternative for kids seeking a "high" as opposed to huffing and sniffing cleaning products;
4. it would substantially reduce burden on taxpayers for health;
5. it would substantially reduce burden on taxpayers for policing the failed drug war - cost of man power for roadside testing and court appearances; costs of clogged up courts and free up the courts in criminal justice system enabling a back log of real crimes (with victims) to be addressed; cost of testing - laboratory \$800 / kits \$50 x 97,000 anticipated tests in coming year); cost of search and destroy missions every summer.

6. If cannabis were not a prohibited substance our streets would be a great deal safer,. Australians are a pleasure seeking nation - nothing will change that - and cannabis poses much less of a threat than alcohol abuse.

All users are at the mercy and discretion of the LAW which currently shows NONE.

Restricted access to the cannabis is NOT appropriate access. The law is the only thing that keeps it this way. The people will continue to use it regardless of consequences. Removing Cannabis from the poison schedule is a good start to removing its illicit status, and a huge step toward improving the health of a nation.

In conclusion, I would like to add that the MCUA is an Australian representative on the International Medical Cannabis Patients Coalition (IMCPC) who will be submitting a Declaration addressing all countries and their representatives taking part at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs 2016 (UNGASS2016) to adopt it and incorporate it into the Declaration of the UNGASS2016.

The IMCPC declaration requires that the UNGASS2016 request that Governments either :

exclude cannabis out of the 1961 UN Convention with no other actions,

or

prepare debate and accept a Special UN Convention on Cannabis, that would be based on the scientific evidence, human rights and the well-being of societies;

and

as suggested by the World Health Organisation, re-schedules cannabis to account for its medical use, and in amendment prepare special regulations for medical cannabis that would not mimic those of medical opiates and opium.

This General Assembly Special Session on Drugs 2016 may be the catalyst that begins to change the face of cannabis prohibition for the future. With world wide acceptance snowballing, it may be wise to consider the possible outcomes and repercussions of this session on the Australian people, and take steps now that will prevent double handling of the issue at a later date - costing more time, money and lives.

You have to see that change is inevitable. Why not be a leader rather than a follower in this important decision.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of over 10,000 known users of medical cannabis

Yours sincerely

Gail Hester
Interim President
MCUA of Australia Inc
on behalf of 10,000 MCUA members

As an assessment of how the proposed change will impact on MCUA members I sort feedback about what they see as the likely benefits or costs to them (financial or non-financial). The following is a selection of their comments as MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS:

Mary Sturzaker

I take the oil for last stage copd, cardiomyopathy, lupus, chronic pain and more. I'm running out of oil and is so hard to get, I cant get access to the weed as I'm relativity new to place,so its hard and then there is the price as well, because its not legal it is so expensive. its getting really hard. Id been taking all the normal medication for my illnesses and nothing really worked, so many side effects, the pain was unbearable, and then I started taking the oil, it controlled the pain like nothing else has done before,helps with the anxiety , helps with my breathing, my lung function has gone up from 20% to 26% after a few short months on it. For me that is a miracle, I sleep well, as before I was lucky to sleep for 3 hours a night, now I sleep like a log. There are no side effects at all with the oil, just improves my life so much, I now have quality of life, I didn't have that before. But my problem is being able to obtain the oil, and being able to afford the oil is becoming a major problem . It makes me so angry that it isn't legal, there is no reason for it not to be legal, only the pharma people loose money, the rest of us gain our lives back

1.Lyn Cleaver

Not once out of over 20 different treatments have we seen our sons seizures controlled. Every single treatment caused unwanted and debilitating side effects.

We will not offer our son single compound or pharmaceutical synthetic cannabis when we can offer him better and the science backs us in that choice for whole plant cannabis being more effective.

Will the changes mean we can continue juicing raw cannabis for his general health and well being?

****Since using home grown cannabis our family saves the tax payer approximately twenty thousand dollars a year in subsidised medications.*** (\$20,000 a year – on patient)**

We home grow to ensure safety and supply. We cannot afford to buy pharmaceutical cannabis preparations and we cannot afford to buy black market cannabis medicines. The cost to subsidise substandard cannabis medicines through the PBS will be huge which is unreasonable considering how cost effectively cannabis can be grown and medicine produced locally.

Cannabis is scheduled as a poison, ironically cannabis is the safest treatment that comes side effect free for our son when all other treatments offered at therapeutic doses had to be reduced or discontinued altogether.

2. Vince Doran

I first got Crohn's 20 odd years ago and lost my large intestine, I started smoking Cannabis after that and went into remission...sweet...then gave up to work in the mines 4years ago and Crohn's is back BIG time. I am currently on a drug (Humira) that ***cost \$450 per week (tax payer picks up the bill). It does very little to help and has some nasty side effects, I would like to have access to a better alternative...Cannabis, home grown. If I can produce excess I will try and save my sister and others from the same disease as I have...FOR FREE

3. Fred Fotis

The elderly are the fastest growing group of cannabis users in the world. If the Government does not regulate for adult use, millions of elderly Australians will be left behind and be forced to buy synthetic cannabis as has been reported. Aged Australians stand to miss out on the benefits aged people are experiencing around the world. The only way that aged Australians can afford to use cannabis is through the regulation of grow your own. Adults should be allowed to grow up to 6

plants and where aged Australians can not due to there circumstances, a nominated person or compassion club can grow their quota

4. Deborah Howe

I wish to grow my own. This means I am not allowed to do so. Medical cannabis is one of the few medications that is not toxic and is basically impossible to overdose on. To have this plant in the same category as opiates etc is ridiculous. I keep getting told there is not enough evidence based research to move forward with rescheduling cannabis. That everything so far is anecdotal How is that possible when California is currently celebrating 20 years of use. 20 years of evidence. The largest medical association in California, the CMA is now calling for it to be fully legalised. <http://www.sacbee.com/.../marijuana/article57799473.html> The American National Cancer Institute now recognises the medical benefits of cannabis. This plant is not dangerous and without medical applications <http://www.cancer.gov/about.../treatment/cam/hp/cannabis-pdq> patients should have the right to manage their own health. It is a basic right of the patient to do so. Vaping whole plant cannabis flowers has saved my life. I know longer am fighting addiction of opiates, I no longer need Centrelink. My nerve damage is managed with minimal use of Medicare. All I need to continue doing this is to legally grow approx 4 plants at a time. People who need oil may need a larger number but for myself, that is enough. If you want to reduce expenditure on Medicare. Legalise cannabis. It has replaced 3 prescription drugs for me. What a blessing it has been
Jess Argh I am a horticulturist and a mum. I wish to have full access to grow my own herbs for therapeutic uses. Like I do lavender, mint and chamomile.. Without fear of persecution.

5. Michelle Stubb

s .I really do not want medicinal cannabis that comes from a pharmaceutical company...I simply do not trust them...My daughter is sick because of pharmaceuticals... She is also on a disability payment and I am her carer...We barely have enough money to afford everything we need for her health as it is...This is why the right to grow cannabis at home and make your own medicine is so important

6. Carl Taylor

I haven't been able to get any for 3 weeks - pain too much to get too far and sleep is almost impossible. Just have to wait till I pass out and worst part is you ask your so called friends for help but they wont, they just think your are bunging it on

7. Ben Preston

It would be good if I could grow and make medicine for all of my family that needs to get off pharma meds but they're scared to try it because of the police and the unjust laws

8. Tammy Jenkins

I so wish they would legalise medical marijuana, I have rheumatoid arthritis I am now on biological medication called Actemra which is administered through a drip. I also have had 5 surgeries on my spine with the last operation was a spinal reconstruction. I have had pain every day since I was 18 I'm now 56. The arthritis drug costs \$20,000 per year, if I could have medical marijuana this would save the govt thousands per year and that's just me. It has been proven to help arthritis. I now have to have scan on my stomach as my doc thinks I have an ulcer from all the medication I have had to take. This biological med I'm on is the third one I have had as by blood made antibodies and attacked the previous drug which was Enbrel before that was methotrexate which I couldn't tolerate as I felt sick the whole time on this and lost too much weight. What is this medication doing to my body? If I could have medical marijuana I wouldn't be poisoning my body with man made drugs. It's not much to ask for letting me and thousands of people have a naturally grown herb. Please

please make it legal for all people it will help. I will not put the synthetic marijuana (made by pharmaceutical companies) in my body only the naturally grown plant.

9. Janice Webb

As I said they think we are stupid and they think we are so complacent to accept their unhealthy ideas of cannabis treatment, or give us hope that it will be made legal ... this will never happen with their thinking as it is because they decided to test a synthetic concoction on children. It makes me so frustrated that our hands are so tied. Cannabis is Cannabis and the Oil is the Oil what is used from this amazing healing plant to make hundreds and thousands of people well. Come on ... we know the score, those that grow it for themselves know they are getting the best and purest and its the only why to go sooooooooooooo make it legal NOW! no more mucking around testing when its been tested over centuries with miraculous results ... mmmmm maybe ... no! I am sure that is what they are frighten of, to many well heal and so Pharmo's will go down the tube by millions ... but what about life! It gets all too hard to trying to convince these stupid government/health people ... grow it yourself and be brave. If they wish to arrest me at the age of 72 with breast cancer in remission because of the Cannabis Oil ... I will scream the loudest and welcome the publicity

10. Ron Pon

best anti depressant, pain relief and sleep aid for me. if I did not have to buy it any more and was allowed to grow them with the rest of my veggies and herbs, my life would get a whole new turn for the better, meaning less financial worries and overall better health

11. Debra Barrand

I have to illegally grow cannabis to treat my severe chronic pain, degenerative bone disease, pinched nerves. I'm in urgent need of a knee replacement - I'm prescribed the highest dose of opiates which don't help. Cannabis is the only medicine that helps pain & PTSD where anti depressants, anti seizure drugs cause serotonin syndrome, I'm not a criminal for growing a herb that's saved my life - I've tried to commit suicide caused from the adverse reactions of prescribed pills from prozac, Zoloft, & the list goes on - I just want to grow my own without fear.

12. Helen McCullough Harris

I would like to grow cannabis for my mum and dad. ..
He has chronic pain , dementia, asthma, diabetes he is 84 ..
My mum lupus, asthma , skin problems, likenskilopus she is 81...
I have problems sleeping. ...
This would benefit myself and my family. ...
So I support the whole plant.
I support the herb used by the Egyptian people and by God and his disciples. ...
Not a man made synthetic one

13. Sharon Davies

Please help me, to help myself. To be able to make a healthier and a wiser decision. You see the medicine that you want me to buy, does more physical and emotional damage to my wellbeing. be able to grow my own medicine, would not only help my health, but as well as my pocket, it costs me more than I can afford month. For all the poison that you call medication, sometimes I have to go without medication, as so we can eat. Where as a plant that I can grow for free, would and does help all my health concerns.

14. Stefan Redford

What benefits would I get from medicinal cannabis?

Were I able to access and use medicinal cannabis I would have a natural remedy for my migraines and chronic pain caused from injuries sustained whilst serving in the Australian Regular Army. I am currently taking 2 different forms of prescription medication for my chronic pain and one for my migraines. I am required to attend a Dr each time I need a new script, involving travel and the frustration and anxiety I experience from being out in public. Added to all of this there are the side effects too numerous to mention that I would gladly say goodbye to if using Medicinal Cannabis

15. Ellen Whalan

I am on the Aged Pension. Accident with Severe Spinal Injury maybe more operations. Chronic Pain. Life Ruined. Oxycodone (Targin) & Lyrica..Anti- Depressant..Medication .Would love to grow 2-3 plants like veggies. Cannabis keeps pain away & I want to live rest of my life (what there is of it) pain free please

16. Sue Tate

My son was asthmatic all his childhood and I would tell him that he could never smoke marijuana or cigarettes. He has not had an asthma attack in 30 years since smoking marijuana

17. Chris Wilke

At age 8, I was diagnosed as severe ADHD. Growing up with this made learning very hard – as unlike 98% of children, an ADD\ADHD child learns differently. It also brings dyslexia and other learning problems. So throughout schooling I had endless problems with teachers and learning. It also brings a short temper and anger control problems and for many, insomnia which I also suffered from. By 15 years old I was labelled as an uncontrollable child, had left high school and only just avoided the likes of detention centres. At 16 an extended family offered me a bong. I decided to try it. I found that for me, it felt like I got slowed down to a point where I could make sense of thoughts and concentrate on one thing at a time without jumping to ten other things and most of all, get to sleep without tossing and turning for hours. I was amazed. At the same stage in my life, I decided to go back to high school (year 10) and try and finish school. A part of this plan was to go back to a doctor and see about my ADHD. I walked away from the appointment with that doctor with a prescription for Dex Amphetamine and being told to take it 3 times a day. I continued to try them for a while, however I hated the effects, I felt like I wasn't myself, I reacted differently and felt sick most of the time. So in the end threw them away. My thoughts ran back to when I had tried the weed and thought that might work even with all the information at the time saying it was bad for me, I decided to try it. In the end my schooling ended without me finishing but lead to the world of computers. I ended up learning everything I could about them and at a very fast rate. By the time I was 17 I was working for a major corporation servicing helpdesk. However I also had kept up smoking cannabis. I found that it allowed me to slow down enough at night to sleep, a tiny amount in the morning allowed me to concentrate on tasks through the day. This led me on to a full IT Career and in to high positions with in the largest enterprise companies in Australia. Now at 35 and a very experienced and senior professional in my work life, I still struggle with the ADHD and fear the police with their drug kits. Perhaps the THC & CBD are actually helping to correct the ADHD chemical imbalance in my brain? I don't know for sure – but what I do know is I am a healthy functional adult with a good work life and home, but without Cannabis – I would be a very broken, angry man and possibly jailed. So to me – it saved my life not only from the bad track I was on at a younger age – but also from pharma grade speed addiction, and it will keep doing so for the rest of my life. It would be nice to be able to get the right strain and grow my own and use it in my own way without the fear of losing my job and my life.

To allow appropriate access (i.e. home growing) would mean those with ADD and ADHD can get rid of Ritalin and dex amphetamine for a much safer THC product. Studies in the USA have shown great improvement in those that suffer ADHD and ADD. Appropriate access means choosing the right strain for adhd (G13 Haze from USA is used for add and adhd treatment) and be able to grow it naturally and make my own extracts. I know how to do it. I don't need to pay out for it apart from seeds and growing it freely and naturally. And its 100% better for me then Dex amphetamine which is medical grade speed cut with another chemical and very bad for the body at 3-4 pills a day that make me unable to function as a member of society

18. Justine Bluff

Legalise the whole plant so I'm able to legally grow my own, make my own oil and treat myself. Cost = 0\$ maybe for the seeds and alcohol for the oil. I have Rheumatoid Arthritis. I did the whole Western meds for 5 years which no longer ended up working and created all sorts of side effects and the last 4 I've been managing it with Neurofen

19. Jake Langley

Quality of life, less stress from fear of loosing kids, monetary (I'd spend half my pay easy on "medication") and proper dosage rates and treatment with my GP.

Why can't it be put through the controlled substances? It's not a poison or harmful so are we not mislabelling again? Also controlled substances would be a fresh start with the ability to create a clearer definition of those with medical use and the black market? Bla bla bla wink emoticon An ounce lasts a fortnight and it costs \$300. It's not the medication I need, but the only option

20. Kevin Sammon

Good friend of mine with Metastatic Breast Cancer spread to the bones undergoing Chemotherapy and Radiation using Medical Cannabis Oil going very well as the Oil helps with receptors for Chemotherapy and improves her appetite and Mental well being anybody that cannot comprehend this Google and read - <http://www.cancer.gov/about.../treatment/cam/hp/cannabis-pdq> Expert-reviewed information summary about the use of Cannabis and cannabinoids in the treatment of cancer.

21. Jess Argh

I smoke cannabis for stress and an old rage trauma from years ago. It assists sleep and prevents the need of valium or zanex. Cannabis makes me a better parent as I get enough sleep and I'm not groggy in the mornings. I also take cannabis preventatively as I have type 2 diabetes, breast cancer and high blood pressure in my immediate family. I would prefer to make butter from whole plant cannabis and eat it to stop smoking all together, this would require 4 plants all year round, that is approx 36 plants a year at zero cost to the govt and the taxpayer. Please let us be the best we can be.

22. Teisha-Lee Mason

We have been giving Cannabis oil to our 9yr old son for the last 2 years for Epilepsy, pain management, and spasticity relief. It has also improved his vision, his blood circulation (before his toe nails and finger nails were always a pale blue, now a nice pink), he has colour to his skin, he was always very pale. He has not been sick once with any kind of illness since being on Cannabis oil. Before we put him on the oil, he had been on every epilepsy drug out there, he was on 4 different types at once and having every side effect on the lists. Even though it hasn't fully stopped his seizures, Cannabis oil has dramatically reduced them from over 50 a day to 5 or 6, and they are very small ones, not distressing to him at all. He is off Morphine and Oxycodone (highly addictive

drugs) for his pain. If we didn't make the decision to put our son on Cannabis oil, he would no longer be with us. I thought I should also mention that we were put in this situation to begin with. Our son was a perfectly healthy normal baby born. At 10 weeks of age he had a bout of gastro, long story short, he was admitted into hospital for dehydration and not treated for it and after 2 days forced home. Within an hour and a half he was in cardiac arrest due to severe dehydration and now has severe brain damage from it. This has happened and now we are the criminals for trying to give our son a better chance at life.

23. Robbie Cook

I use it for my chronic back pain because I don't trust multi national corporate thugs who only care about making more money. Some of the nasty side effects I have seen and heard about convinced me to steer well clear of them

24. Steven Hooper

Nature has its own remedies for pain , let us use what God gave us , he probably had a huge patch in the garden of Eden , just for his own supply !! Lol

On a serious note , my wife passed away from cancer 10 years ago , and the Only thing that helped her was marijuana , after seeing her in so much pain & watching her relax after a smoke , was amazing , how could politicians keep it from people , as the doctors know it's benefits & are prepared to prescribe ?? But their hands are tied by morons !!

25. Deborah Taylor

I want to be able to juice raw cannabis as well as oils for the benefits towards correcting my health issues. I suffer from chronic pain from an assault, Lupus Fibromyalgia PTSD and ADHD. Currently on Fentanyl and endone which isn't working well. All other drugs I have tried have had bad side effects that were worse than not being on them. I am 44 and want to be able to parent and have a pain free life. Not constantly a zombie or bedridden. I've done the gauntlet of spinal nerve blocks. Pain clinics and the latest is they want me on methadone...I am over the massive withdrawals from the opioids when waiting for my next dose.

26. Rodney Chad

I'm going to have a lidocaine infusion cause I am at a dangerous level 120ml methadone a day plus break through tabs; as well as coperin 60 ml, valpro 200 ml, gabapentin 300ml, gabapentin aspin 100mg. I smoke cause the pain just gets too much and cannabis helps relieve my depression. I have been on these same meds for 6 yrs. I'm 48 going on 70 some days.

27. Kylie Donaghy

As most people requiring these products are likely to be on disability benefits, I see personal home production & use to be the most holistic and cost effective way forward for most people. This will also help to ensure more personal security, with no interference of the final product and it's natural processes. It's already hard enough for families with 1 less income earner to support themselves without exorbitant medication costs putting further mental & emotional stresses & budgetary pressures on everyone in an already struggling household.

28. Shann Carse

I suffer with fibromyalgia and have done for 8 odd years. I was on pain killers and anti depressants for years..cost me \$100's a month, Half my brain cells and did not work..cannabis oil is my saviour. Let's me work and function as a normal person. My overall health is much much better. Don't

discriminate by making everyone pay for a herb that nature provides ..there are so many unwell people in our society that will benefit from the real thing. ..PLEASE don't use our kids as guinea pigs in your synthetic trials. .use the real thing.

29. Tony Roy Heard

I suffer with chronic pain 24/7 I've been taking 240mg's of morphine a day since my surgery in 1994,there are a lot of other addictive medications that I'm taking and medical Cannabis would replace most of them and possibly reduce my intake of the morphine that is killing me,so I found out by speaking to Dr David Vivian at the Monash Research clinic. Medical Cannabis would really help me a great deal. I need it I don't want to die yet.

30. Storme Bearer

Cannabis should not be listed in the poisons schedule at all, as it is proven to be safer than probably all compounds that are listed in schedule 2! In fact it is demonstrated to be safer than many legal substances, such as alcohol and tobacco. To do anything other than remove it from the poisons schedule is unethical, at best. By leaving it in the schedule and severely restricting it's use authorities are contributing to outright manslaughter!

In my humble opinion (no I don't have letters next to my name, but that doesn't mean I am uneducated or that I am not of reasonable intelligence), the chronic use of cannabis doesn't cause any significant issues, apart from those relating to it's restriction and legal status! I believe the theory that many adolescent chronic users are attempting to self medicate to the stresses of modern day living in this society. I was one of them once. It is a health issue, not a drug issue. Many turn to other more dangerous drugs, such as alcohol, cigarettes and other illegal substances, due to unavailability of cannabis. In fact if readily available and affordable (gyo) it may well improve many issues as reflected in the statistics coming through from other countries. As long as cannabis remains illegal, people will continue to either obtain it illegally and/or turn to alternatives that in 9 out of 10 cases have worse side effects and/or are more detrimental to their health, and/or less effective.

31. Michelle Eaton

I, just like thousands of other suffering Australians, benefit from the many healing, soothing, therapeutic abilities of full plant cannabis! Since maintaining a daily use of cannabis, through vaporising & also smoking full plant cannabis I have been able to ease chronic pain caused by nerve pain & arthritis & IBS but most of all, for over 12 years now I have ceased my complex partial seizures since deciding to use full plant cannabis on a daily basis! My pharmaceutical pills NEVER EVER fully controlled or ceased my seizures - only when full plant cannabis was used on a daily basis did this start & still happen!!!! Cannabis has NEVER caused any unwanted side effects, it is safe, non-toxic, extremely pleasant to my well-being & still to this day has ZERO DEATH RATES FROM USE! Whether or not Australia makes full plant cannabis LEGAL to all Australians will NOT CHANGE MY VIEWS OR MY USE OF FULL,PLANT CANNABIS!! I also have a right to choose which so called "DRUG" goes into my system & I will ALWAYS choose full plant cannabis!

32. Martyn Wiggins

Back in 1990, I was deliberately run over by a man driving a car, who left the scene, leaving me for dead. The Medico's prescribed, all kinds of schedule 8 pain relieving drugs, for me to use! This is when the problems began, every single prescription drug, has side effects, and for me, they created suicidal/homicidal thoughts, and did NOT really relieve the pain. I informed the Medico's, of this problem, in 1995. They ALL suggested I utilise cannabis, and stop the prescription drugs! After

taking their recommendations, I found a cannabis supplier, and began to utilise it! To my surprise, the cannabis, does relieve 99% the pain, making life that little more liveable. There was only one problem; it was the worry and paranoia, which developed. I informed the Medico's, who ALL told me, "It was the laws creating this situation"! What? They explained it this way- "Subconsciously. You know you are breaking the law, and in turn, worry about that! You must stop thinking you are breaking the law, and the worries will disappear"! And they did! Until, the Government began road side testing, and now the worries have returned! All due to the introduction of draconian laws! It has now been, 20 years since I took up daily medical cannabis, and have never looked back, never had a driving accident in that time, and have never had any mental issues, at all!

33. Shannon Kay

Maybe a license system that allows a person to grow at home? A simply process that costs say \$150 per year or something and you can grow up to 10 plants on your own property. Other than that there should also be medical cannabis dispensaries that sell it to people who cannot grow it at home and have the appropriate certificate that allows them to buy from a cannabis dispensary. But I sadly think none of that will happen in Australia for a very long time. What I can see happening is cannabis being grown by people who get the licenses to do so (very strict) and that weed will be used by pharmaceutical companies to make some oil or something with the majority of the THC taken out and then sold to very sick people only, like the terminally ill or very young kids with severe epilepsy. The government doesn't seem interested in the majority of people who want to use cannabis for ailments that it helps with. They want to keep it illegal for the vast majority of us.

33. Chris Phillips

I would love that we could grow our own and also have access to the best practice of obtaining the oil etc from the plant I would grow for my own use !

I have now spent over fifteen years on OxyContin and it's useless now but to drop it completely without a viable substitute is impossible !

I should be able to grow for my own use and be supported in my quest for quality care.

34. Azure-Dee Johnston

I completely agree with all your work. Australia has now have to swallow the truth green is a true natural healer and we should have the right to use these products legally,when my best mate was dying from cancer , (he didn't smoke)until he had a smoke after chemotherapy then I saw my loved one comfortable and hungry again. Now I am going through this situation again on an other scale all I want is the best for our humanity.

35. James Leschke

It should be able to be home-grown but toxicity tests created accurately so you can get an idea of how much THC there is in the grown product and depending on the illness/es you should be able to receive education on what the right strains are more effective for those as stated above.

36. David Cooper

I agree to Full Whole Plant Legalisation for every person who chooses to use cannabis, in any way they see fit, as long as they harm no one in doing so. Regulated the same way as a natural product like growing your own veggies,choosing to smoke tobacco or to make Home Brew Alcohol but not GMO versions. It should be illegal to sell , unless one is licensed to sell. As for Impairment Laws , it should be the same as alcohol .05 in all states of this country. It should be legal like tobacco, able to buy over the counter but not to be used by under 25 year olds, and not consumed near eatery's or used in the work place. Sensible Open Full Plant Legalisation , able to grow a maximum of two

plants per household for the majority of the population, Without needing a Doctors Prescription. Failing to fulfil the above request is a criminal act upon the bill of human rights. Even if we have to be licensed yearly to have a right to grow , posses and use cannabis , is better than Defrauding the Public by only giving it to chronically ill patients via a doctors cert. At least the Gov / Corp can get a revenue via a yearly license.

37. John Mills

Patients need legally protection from arrest and prosecution to grow use and carry cannabis. To get a license a patient should only need to see a GP that's it like they do in California and other places. Patients should of come first after all it is medical cannabis not the cannabis industry we are fighting for and they have completely ignored patients rights and there safety. There arguments to avoid home growing are things like a standardised product. Well to achieve that industry or a person has to grow a clone of a selected plant so patients can do that also. There is no such thing as a standardised product in cannabis medicine as every person needs different doses and different strains. Some people want to smoke it others want to juice or eat it in edibles so what ever industry can do the home grower can do also. There argument that home grown cannabis will end up on the street is also a joke. So much black market cannabis is grown now that patients and recreational users don't need any industry to supply them. As so much is grown all over Australia now all home growing would do is hurt the black market as patients would no longer have a need to use it. So there argument only helps protect the black market there fearful from.

38. Marion Kunelius

I'd like the right to be able to grow my own organic plants for my own use and if you can't grow your own get it from a dispensary .

39. Rach Tipping

I want the right to grow my own and be in the position to decide what is right for me and not having someone tell me what I can and can't do in regards to my health and well being

40. Lori Phil

The Medical System has failed my family in 90% of their care needs, I like most others have turned to natural therapy's with great success. We will always seek natural over Pharmaceutical because 'it works!' God created natural for our benefit, not our demise! Big Pharma does not want any person to be well because money is 'their' God. My God is 'The One and only God' who created Cannabis for our well being as written in His Word, The Bible!

<https://patients4medicalmarijuana.wordpress.com/.../mari.../> We want to grow our own Cannabis as it is a healing herb, not a drug! We need to consume and use 'every' part of it NOW like it was intended for us to do! Our bodies need natural cannabinoids in our bodies to be healthy, not synthetic rubbish that will ultimately make us and keep us sick!

41. Stewart Dodd

It's a herb .. Herbs heal. I really like to juice the live plant .. For the immune system .. Yet I need something for anti nausea due to medication. Then I need a different strain to sleep and help with my anxiety .. So I need different strains. Why can't I grow it organically and not buy from the black market where I get whatever I can. It might work it might not. I might not be able to afford It some fortnight and it might have insecticides or anything in or on it.

If I want to grow to make oil. I need to be able to do that. Maybe 50 plants?? to make a year of oil .. I don't know I never have had enough to make much oil. Let alone a years supply .. For myself Why can't someone on the TICS scheme get a license to grow a private amount

42. Cameron Gilmore

I personally want to be able to make legal decision about my own personal health, its fundamentally a breach of human rights to deny "anyone" access to a medicinal plant which bares beneficial fruit, seed and oil..

I fully welcome whole plant legalisation and full recreational use for the entire planet, let alone Australia! People are waking up to the facts all over the globe and would be such a pity for Australia to miss out on such an exclusive opportunity to join the leaders in human health!!

43. Janet Atkinson

Would much rather be on Cannabis oil than steroids and Keppra for my conditions. I need it too. The herb is working miracles. I am a 66yr old Gran and never stepped outside the law but I will try and source this oil - if it means the Gov has to jail me then so be it, could do with a holiday

Electronic submissions are preferred and should be emailed to:

•medicines.scheduling@tga.gov.au

AND

•chemicals.scheduling@health.gov.au