

**Submission
No 121**

**INQUIRY INTO USE OF CANNABIS FOR MEDICAL
PURPOSES**

Name: Ms Trisha Ellis

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The Director of General Purpose Standing Committee No.4,

a) *The efficacy and safety of cannabis for medical purposes.*

Although compounds in Marijuana can relieve pain, combat nausea and stimulate appetite however the question is whether these health benefits outweigh the risks. (Ref: Live Science - Medical Marijuana: Benefits vs Risks)

- The Cancer Council NSW only acknowledges that cannabis may be of medical benefit to cancer patients where conventional treatments are unsuccessful and only in certain circumstances. **In other words, the last resort!**
- The USA FDA (and our TGA) has not approved marijuana in its plant form as a treatment because during a 2004 congressional testimony, a doctor speaking on behalf of the FDA said marijuana as a botanical product is difficult to test for efficacy and safety because the proportions of active chemicals can range greatly from plant to plant. **This should be of great concern to patients and the long term effects of smoking Cannabis have been widely published such as acute anxiety, cognitive impairment and depression.**
- **Medicinal drugs are open to abuse and legalising Cannabis will also encourage more abuse as per alcohol. Youth have access to alcohol as never before and we are now seeing epidemic proportions of youth related incidences with alcohol.**
- Decriminalising the growing of cannabis plants or the possession of personal use of quantities by eligible patients is **"NOT THE ANSWER as other methods of treatment are more effective"**.

b) *if and how cannabis should be supplied for medical use.*

- Medical Cannabis should only be supplied after far more extensive research has definitely shown the benefits outweigh the risks. Because this is not so yet, I am against Medical Cannabis at this point in time and would recommend that the committee make further investigations.

c) *Legal implications and issues concerning the use of cannabis for medical purposes.*

- Due to the high cost of importing cannabis and the laws already prohibiting the cultivation and sale of this plant here in Australia, I would recommend the standing committee research how they will cultivate land for cannabis growth with adequate protection and safeguards. Our current government has not proven to have the skills to adequately manage projects of this nature as per their failed insulation batts, internet program, etc. Therefore I am proposing the standing committee neither imports nor cultivates locally until more thorough research and planning is done.

e) *Any other related matters.*

- May I suggest we watch Israel closely with her cultivation projects of medicinal cannabis and other such countries, to determine if cannabis is a long term beneficial option for medicinal use and if importing or local cultivation is desirable or sustainable.

Yours sincerely,
Ms Trisha (Orysia) Ellis