

INQUIRY INTO USE OF CANNABIS FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

Name: Name suppressed
Date received: 15/02/2013

Partially Confidential

RE: Parliamentary Enquiry into medical cannabis.

I support the decriminalization of Cannabis for both medical and recreational use.

I discovered marijuana in _____ and consider the impact of cannabis on my mental and emotional health to be a positive health benefit. Apart from a three year hiatus when I was pregnant and breast feeding my son, I think I can truthfully say I have smoked cannabis, mixed with tobacco almost every day for the past 40 years.

I have used cannabis as a social lubricant and panacea. It works as an attitude adjuster – problems, stress and irritating annoyances drop away. I've found cannabis works for a whole range of mental, physical, emotional and spiritual needs, harmonizing the disharmony – it dulls physical pain as well as mental anguish simply by making you not care anymore. Your mind drifts off and you get involved in more enjoyable, pleasant activities. I don't claim it fixes or heals or mends things, but it sure makes those harsh experiences a lot more bearable.

I have had few health problems and rarely visit a doctor, although I did get migraines during my 40's which have now abated in my menopausal 50s. I've never lost a demerit point or been involved in a car accident and managed to return to university as a _____ mature aged student receiving a BA in _____ in _____ and a Diploma in _____ in _____. I'm self-employed and undertake a range of activities for both individuals and community groups and consider I have led a very full rich and rewarding life.

My lungs look like most 55 year old smokers (between 5-10 a day) and I admit I do puff now when forced to climb steep driveways or stairs. Over the last decade I've been weaning myself off smoking and found it much more difficult to give up tobacco. I had no repercussion or withdrawal when I stopped smoking cannabis for 5 months while overseas last year.

I've also taken to brewing cannabis oil which can be used in a variety of ways. A tablespoon directly from the bottle for severe pain, mixed in cooked and raw foods or applied directly on the skin to relieve itches and rashes, I find it works well on ticks, mossaie bites and hives.

I have been pleasantly impressed by the response from people who have tried my cannabis oil.

Lots of over 50 ex-cannabis smokers have enjoyed a green cake for purely recreational purposes and reported positive benefits for sleeping, depression and anxiety and sense of well being, sometimes even euphoria. A trained nurse accidentally ate a piece of cake and later believed she must be dying because she felt so intensely happy, full of wisdom and compassion, absolutely euphoric - the only time she'd even seen people in that state was just before they died!

People with severe back pain, breast and lung cancer sufferers, chemo patients, people with muscle and nerve pain, myelosis and arthritis all report similar improvements to pain tolerance and moods.

A close friend in their 70s had a triple heart bypass and stents in an aortic aneurism – two major heart operations in the legacy of his lifetime cigarette addiction. His carer reported he definitely slept better and moods improved significantly with a few drops of oil in his dinner – whether he knew he was taking it or not.

I have few negative experiences to relate – apart from the legal ramifications – I was busted in for cultivating plants in our suburban garden (in response to friends heart problems, when I made serious effort to stop smoking and use oil as an alternative). I would also suggest my open use of cannabis has impacted on social relationships and work opportunities mainly due to preconceived and incorrect assumptions about cannabis users.

I have been able to make small, regular purchases of Cannabis without any difficulty throughout the past 40 years and consider many suppliers close friends. Although private sellers and growers come and go and it occasionally gets harder to procure I don't think I've ever not been able to find a smoke when I wanted one. I'm grateful to the farmers who continue to provide for their customers under such a harsh and punishing legal and social regime.

I like being around cannabis users because they are usually far more pleasant company than drinkers. They are less aggressive and usually fairly relaxed, and laidback. At worst, a cannabis smoker can become dopey, raving or boring and fall asleep if they smoke too much, which is far preferable to a leacheous groping, or pent up aggression you find amongst alcohol users.

As a regular recreational user I have found cannabis to have many beneficial medicinal uses and I strongly encourage the legalisation and restrictions around cannabis use to be reconsidered by parliament.