

**Submission
No 66**

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

Name: Ms Avril Barrett

Date received: 15/02/2013

Submission on the use of medical marijuana from Avril Barrett, Blue Knob, NSW

Summary

I have used marijuana on and off as medicine since mid 1980. It has been a great boon to my life quality by enabling me to deal with various types of pain and psychological issues. I am unable to take chemical pain killers and many other chemical medications. Suffering chronic pain from severe arthritis and other issues as a result of contracting malaria three times.

My life would be a daily – 24 hour – grind of agony and mental terror. I also now suffer severe PTSD after a home invasion and near death bashing of my husband and assault on myself.

Without the wonderful medicine, marijuana, I could not sustain a useful and worthwhile life. Apart from my illness I am also Carer for my husband since the bashing.

It is a major issue that we are breaking the law by using marijuana and would love to see our medicine made legal. We are fortunate to have access to Mullaway Medical Marijuana tincture and oil.

Submission

My name is Avril Barrett and I live in the Northern Rivers, NSW. I am married to Peter and apart from being a partner I am also his carer. Peter suffers from extreme pain and will provide his own submission.

I first tried marijuana in 1970. It was recreational and only an occasional thing. It did not continue. Around the mid 1980's I returned to using marijuana for severe period pains; these led to a hysterectomy in late 1992. I was 40. By this time my body was also suffering pains from earlier injuries – crushed neck, shortened leg, internal issues due to extreme physical discipline/fear and malaria. I suffer from many issues as a result of contracting malaria when I was five years old. I contracted malaria again in 1995 and then in 1997. This has led to a manifest of issues.

When I returned to marijuana it was for pain relief; after the hysterectomy my use waned but I soon realised it had been helping me with the other issues I dealt with. The most significant of those was insomnia. Sleep provides significant benefits and is essential.

My active life continued and with it a decline in my physical health. In 1998 I was extremely ill and did not improve. In early 1999 I was retired from CSIRO on medical grounds. This was an extreme blow as I loved my work and CSIRO.

The loss of career and the need to move to warmer climate led to mental failure issues – no job, no family close by, no friends close by, etc. I spent six years working on this with a counsellor and attending Tai Chi classes almost daily. I also did workshops on such topics as dealing with anger and finding peace in one's life. Throughout this time I also used marijuana medically.

I have periods when I am doing better and have less need for the wonders of marijuana medicine but as I age those periods are almost non-existent.

I feel extremely privileged and lucky to be able to use Mullaway's Medical Marijuana tincture and oil. This is an enormous boon to my life. I also use a vapouriser when I need additional medication.

I have worked with youth to educate them on the use of drugs and moderation in life. I have strong views regarding responsible drug use but I am extremely opposed to the prohibition.

Governments must stop telling the people what their views and morals should be or we will be left with a population of idiots with no ability to judge or think for themselves.

The evidence of the benefits of marijuana is extensive and growing. This medicine should not be withheld from anyone who could benefit.

Yours Faithfully
Avril Barrett
15 February 2013