

**Submission
No 36**

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

Name: Mr Gregory Howard

Date received: 11/02/2013

Gregory J Howard

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No 4
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

THIS IS MY OWN INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION FOR
INQUIREY INTO THE MEDICAL USE OF CANNABIS.

My name is Gregory John Howard, I am 36 years old, work full-time as a tradesman, have a mortgage and live with my fiancé and two sons.

Unfortunately, I suffer from a skin disease known as HS or Hidradenitiz Suppurativa. HS presents itself in three stages, due to a large spectrum of clinical severity and impacts significantly on quality of life.

Stage 1 Single or multiple abscess formation without scarring.

Stage 2 Recurrent abscesses, single or multiple widely separated lesions with sinus tract formation. (linking together)

Stage 3 Diffuse or broad involvement across a regional area with multiple interconnected sinus tracts and abscesses. (Inflammation of sites to the size of golf balls or sometimes baseballs; scarring develops, including subcutaneous tracts of infection. Obviously, patients at this stage may be unable to function.

INFORMATION ABOVE FROM WIKIPEDIA

I don't think I need to explain how painful these symptoms can be.

Now to the cannabis use;

I have used cannabis when younger for social or recreational purposes and now for medical use only.

Last June I was caught by Police growing a small amount of cannabis (which I only smoked to keep my skin under control), it really is the only thing I find helps me get out of bed and lead a normal like, without being depressed or in pain. If I could get a job and convince my partner to leave her family, I would move to the ACT, where I know they permit two plants for personal use. This seems a ludicrous situation.

I have consulted with therapeutic goods administration and my skin specialist to gain access to products overseas. My specialist seemed interested and was more than willing to help me but declined signing the paperwork because he was certain a class A drug would never be allowed under the scheme.

I have also sent letter to the Minister for Health Jillian Skinner, Barry O'Farrell, Bob Car and Julia Gillard, all to no avail.

When will the Government acknowledge the medicinal benefits from cannabis, like countless other countries around the globe?

How can our leaders ignore the 2011 World Commission into drugs and the harms caused by prohibition?

Copying ACT's policy of allowing two plants per household would be a simple start, so people can medicate themselves, without there being a burden on taxpayers, with the money that gets wasted on Police and Courts, not to mention the individual, who is caught up in the legal system, from a victimless crime.

All that pain sufferers' need is compassion not sympathy.

G.J. Howard