

Submission  
No 82

## INQUIRY INTO USE OF CANNABIS FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

It is my opinion that cannabis should be available under strict medical supervision as an alternative treatment for a range of ailments. I also believe it should be researched further to ensure that any negative effects associated as to the use of cannabis can be eliminated or reduced to a negligible and acceptable level. I would like to add that I would be very interested in using regulated cannabis that is tested as to the potency of the psychoactive ingredients.

I currently grow my own cannabis and below I'll outline the reasons why. Firstly is financial although contrary to general community belief as to why people grow cannabis, I do not grow cannabis for anything other than personal use. I do not sell any of my 1 or 2 plants which are grown using hydroponic methods and artificial lighting. The costs of growing cannabis to the amounts I require and the associated hydroponic and artificial lighting costs, still makes it far more viable to grow then source cannabis externally. Initial set up costs are quite high, over \$1000 although once operational costs are as stated above lower then sourcing cannabis externally.

More importantly I am not sourcing my cannabis from 'dealers' whom either for financial or personal use reasons charge extensively prices and have poor handling and little or no quality control measures. Most often these locations are not safe areas, either physically due the nature of the clientele they attract or legally as again police are often well aware of their locations and activities.

Whilst growing cannabis may to the outsider seem a profitable and 'easy' way to create volumes of cannabis, it is often fraught with dangers. The illegality of cultivation and the implications with the involvement of the law and potential implications for my employment are constant fears but equally if not more so is the potential involvement of child protection services and a home invasion.

Having a working knowledge of child protection legislation due, to my occupation, this fear has been pervasive since the addition of my daughter. I often laugh at the oxymoron that can be at times using cannabis for the relief of anxiety yet some of this anxiety can be attributed to the above mentioned issues. Also the societal norm that children should not be around illicit substances and with cannabis being considered one of these, I, at times have an overwhelming but unfounded fear that, I, am in some way failing as a father or most distressingly exposing my child to harmful substances/s.

I also worry that the times she has seen "daddy having his medication" and the consequences as to if she inadvertently divulges this information to a teacher and any consequences that could come from this. I want to make it clear that my 'grow room' is in a lockable room. My cannabis and equipment inside it stored in area not accessible by children. I do, at times, consume cannabis in my room via the vaporisation method but this room is well ventilated and the door is locked during these times. Most frustratingly is that on a daily professional and personal basis, I observe children being exposed to alcohol. I have also witnessed parents indulge in behaviour that would not normally considered as 'acceptable' yet condoned as the person was intoxicated by alcohol.

The other issue I fear on a daily basis is the fear of a home invasion. I live in area with a high mix of residents with high level of intergenerational socio-economic issues. Some of these are familiar with the equipment used in the hydroponic production and associated smells that can be expelled from the grow area. All lights and air exiting the grow room must be controlled to eliminate the possibility of detection either by the above mentioned police or opportunistic criminals who may happen to

stumble across your property. In relations to the above mentioned 'smells', cannabis has a very distinctive smell and the 'strain' I cultivate due to its aroma during flower would be unable to be grown in a suburban yard.

What I was told prior to the commencement of my own production nearly ten years ago by others was 'tell nobody'. Because to the 'altruistic' reason as to the purpose of my 'grow room' and that was for my own medicinal supply, I was once, reasonably open as to who had knowledge, but only with close personal friends and at times work colleagues whom a friendship had developed during my working period. The reason I mention the work colleagues angle is that my disclosure as to my use and procurement has created situations, two of which I detail below.

A work colleague whom I developed a personal relationship with over a period of four years placed my professional employment and ended his accommodation and employment by asking me to breach client confidentiality. I obvious did not to this and to cut a long story short he had information that could have been directly used against me and whilst not having my daughter during this time, I was more concerned of him or his mates undertaking a home invasion or inform police. And more recently, I left an organisation that I had worked in for 14yrs. The ending of my long standing employment occurred after my actions created an incident and a colleague whom I had worked with from my initial employment essentially soured. Because I had years ago disclosed my information to him regarding my grow room and cannabis use, I felt limited in my actions against him and compounded more was his former employment was that of police officer. If I had a medical/research exemption I would still for obvious reasons remain discreet but would alleviate the above mentioned and constant stressors.

I had written over two pages outlining my ongoing battle that is pain management. I have eventually summarised it as simple as this, I am mostly able to manage my pain psychologically during the day but find it extremely hard if not impossible at night. This is where cannabis is for me ideal. I am unable to sleep due to my constant pain levels and other then the above mentioned pharmaceuticals there are no other medications and or techniques that can assist me. Cannabis fills this need for me. Prior to the announcement of this enquiry I recently commented that it would be 'interesting' for want of a better word, if I for health or legal reason had to cease my Cannabis use, how the medical or indeed myself manage the sleep issue given the lack of options relating to my pain management. There are also some days particularly the days after a fishing/camping trip where in a nutshell I am unable to move. I find Cannabis does relieve some joint and muscle stiffness but cannot claim that it relieves all the symptoms to a point where I again become functional. What it does do is allow for my body to relax and recover and find the on most occasions am able to resume tasks the following day albeit at a slower pace and more effectively than any prescribed medication/s.

I use a method known as vaporisation to administer cannabis to myself. This method uses a heat source to heat the material to a temperature where the volatile oils are released and these oils in Cannabis's case contain the psychoactive ingredients. Whilst not completely without risks it is in my opinion a vast improvement in the administration these ingredients without the added risks of other contaminants that may be contained and released when the product is carbonised (burnt). I am aware of 'overseas research' into vaporisers and again encourage research into using this system for

the administration of medicinal cannabis as to the positive and negative effects that this method has.

I would like to restate my intention of making a submission to this enquiry and that is use the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes for those with chronic complex disabilities. I am still unsure as if this submission is the 'right' thing to do given I have essentially confessed to a multiple of criminal offences, but I feel and have so for a substantial period of time that I need to 'inform and educate' those in positions of power as to the benefits I receive from cannabis. I am hopeful that this document is not used against me.

I am unable to propose a system other than possible prescription by a specialist doctor as my ADHD medication is currently prescribed. I would still like to cultivate cannabis as being an avid gardener do enjoy this activity and this has provided my with a huge amount of transferable horticultural knowledge, but would also respect the need to access regulated cannabis to ensure any research undertaken provides sound results.