

**Submission
No 73**

**INQUIRY INTO ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT
(MEDICINAL CANNABIS-EXEMPTIONS FROM
OFFENCES) BILL 2021**

Name: Mr Nicholas Robinson

Date Received: 29 April 2022

I am a registered nurse and I currently work for a general practice that treats hundreds of patients with medical cannabis prescriptions under the TGA provisions.

In my experience of working with our patients to improve their health and wellbeing, the current drug driving laws are an enormous barrier to many who would benefit from this type of treatment. Medical cannabis is not the best type of treatment for every patient, but for the patients who do benefit from it, many do not proceed due to essentially being barred from driving. As the law currently stands, we must inform all our patients with prescriptions that contain THC that they should not drive. The saliva kits that the police use on roadside tests, in theory, are designed to detect traces of THC within 8-12 hours of use. However, in practice many people have reported positive results more than 12 hours after their last stated use. To receive benefits from medical cannabis treatment it must be used regularly and consistently, i.e. it is a daily medication.

Essentially the current laws force patients to choose between their ability to drive their car or receive relief from their chronic health conditions. In many cases the inability to drive forces patients to miss work or education opportunities unless they suffer through their symptoms which many find untenable or completely debilitating. When forced to make this choice, many patients continue to drive anyway knowing the risk of losing their license because the relief that medical cannabis provides them. For the majority of the patients I work with, medical cannabis is the only treatment they have found that works for them after a long journey through the healthcare system including pain specialists, physiotherapy, and multiple medications including opioids.

I support the Road Transport Amendment (Medicinal Cannabis - Exemptions from Offences) Bill 2021 whole heartedly and believe it will improve the lives of thousands of Australians who are currently forced to choose between their health and ability to attend work or education.