

**Submission
No 50**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE REGULATORY
FRAMEWORK FOR CANNABIS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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I'm a sixty-plus male living in regional NSW. Many people here have tried medicinal cannabis for relaxation, anxiety reduction, chronic pain, increased sociability, and an enhanced appreciation of nature, music, food, and sex. They are the lucky ones, they can afford it.

If you cannot afford medicinal cannabis you are missing out on its known benefits. The only alternative is risking prosecution by procuring cannabis from other sources. Legalisation is a better policy than prohibition because it reduces the costs of enforcing criminal laws and the incarceration of cannabis users. A legal cannabis regime could bring greater public awareness about the uses of cannabis through measures like public health campaigns. Furthermore, studies have shown that the adverse health effects of cannabis are modest in comparison with those of alcohol, tobacco, and opioids. Cannabis has an excellent safety profile and is a historically established medicine. One meta-analysis on cannabis use reported no association between cannabis use and aggression in adult populations.

We know that low socioeconomic conditions often point people in the direction of smoking and alcohol use. They become the only reward for the way of life presented to them. Individuals with lower SES experience greater alcohol-related consequences and health risks. Medicinal cannabis is only an option for the upper class.

Cannabis is a herb; you can and should be able to grow it yourself. Gardening is good for mental health. Therefore growing cannabis for personal use must be legalised. Recent Australian studies show criminal penalties may marginally discourage some people from using cannabis but they do not influence how much cannabis is consumed by those who do use. Its time to disengage from the dated sanctimonious precepts that International Drug Control Treaties, such as the Single Convention have placed on Australian citizens.