

Submission  
No 94

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

I use prescribed cannabis medically for pain control and PTSD as directed. This has resulted in a huge improvement in my quality of life, and my ability to deal with the mental health issues related to PTSD. My psychiatrist has documented my improvement and commented on how much better I am doing because of this. Part of the reason I am using medical cannabis is my inability to tolerate other more 'mainstream' drugs, having tried many, many of them with no success, and in fact having some tend me towards suicidal thoughts, as well as my fear of opioid addiction. Prior to medical cannabis being available and prescribed for me, I was taking huge amounts of opioids just trying to get relief, from the pain, and a huge and varied amount of anti-depressants and anti-psychotics just trying to get relief from the PTSD to no avail. All that I got was getting smashed off my head on opioids and suicidal tendencies from the others. But with these drugs, and in this mental and physical condition from taking loads of them, as per prescription, I was able to drive legally, no matter what my physical or mental condition. Since medical cannabis, I no longer take any opioids nor have I for many years, other than surgical hospital visits where no choice is available.

Unfortunately, although the benefits of this drug have been huge to myself, the cost is prohibitive. As there are many strains, and I have discovered that each strain works differently, it has been a journey of trial and error to find the correct one/s (a bit like with mental health drugs however the side effect of this are just "work or don't work", no issues with suicidal or other mental aberrations) and has cost many thousands of dollars, and many privations for myself and my family to manage this, as there is no government support for this amazing drug. I am fully supported in this by my wife, and externally by my family, as they see the huge benefits for me, but the financial drain is huge and as I am on a disability pension, it is an indescribable struggle to afford living costs and pay for this medication. I am aware that there are many people who could benefit hugely from this medication but are unable to afford it.

I can't stress enough that I use this NOT for 'the stone', in fact if I ever inadvertently have a little too much, I absolutely hate the feeling. This does not happen often, but in trying new strains, there is a (an expensive) learning curve. This is not why I use it. The relief it gives me, both medical and physical, in appropriate amounts is indescribable in terms of the improvement in functionality in my life.

Due to the drug driving laws, my wife has to drive me everywhere, which although OK with both of us, in a huge inconvenience at many times. If I didn't have my wife available, I would be trapped, living in an area with no public transport available, and no way to go anywhere, as I live in country NSW. I don't have the scientific knowledge to be able to offer a solution to drug driving testing, but noting too that I would not have had the solution for drink driving testing, however this was found. I do think that anyone on approved, prescribed, medical cannabis, using it correctly according to the prescription, should have some sort of medical exemption for driving, as long as they have not used it in the short term prior to driving, and are in full control, which should not be an issue if they follow the prescription guidelines. If people are 'stoned' their behaviour and the way they look tend to show this, and this could be part of the guidelines for the police in checking competency to drive.

People that oppose cannabis as a medically prescribed drug seem to do this from a position of ignorance. I personally did not see the benefit of it, and did not want to be 'stoned' and/or lose control. Now I personally experience the benefit and cannot speak highly enough of the amazing changes it has given myself and others, and do not get stoned, just get relief from my medication, both mentally and physically.

Along with many, many other uses for cannabis, that of medicine is incomparable to generally prescribed pharmaceuticals, and I can't imagine going back to life the way it was.

Please seriously consider proper regulation, government support for the prescriptions, and assessment of driving laws for this drug - I never thought I would see the day I would be saying

that cannabis can help so many people in so many ways if correctly utilised. I also note that the benefits of legalisation are many - not just medicinally for people, but to the government in income on sales tax etc, the provision of jobs in the nation for people working in places that would grow and prepare etc - I note CANN Group in Mildura as an example - and the savings on chasing down black marketeers in this industry surely would then free up police resources for the actual damaging drugs/criminals.