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

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I am prescribed medicinal cannabis for pain. The pain is from peripheral neuropathy. The pn is caused by Waldenstroms disease.

Prior to mc I was taking the maximum dose of pregabalin Lyrica for the pain. This made me quite dopey and contributed to having to retire early. Post mc the Lyrica has been halved. I am now present with much less pain.

NSW's driving rules are such that I am not allowed to drive when using medicinal cannabis, and I don't. Cannabis, medicinal or otherwise, could impair driving, but having it in oneself doesn't necessarily mean impairment.

An impairment test is needed, eg, for RBT. Also, advice, similar to what is found on other medications requiring those who use it not to operate machinery or drive if impaired, needs to the control.

Being barred from driving means:

- I cannot pick up or take my grandson home. I can't take him anywhere in the car. He has to be brought to me or I have to be taken to him. This means I see him and my relationship with him is less than I otherwise would be.

- I have become more adept at using public transport, an ebike and walking to get around to where I would otherwise drive - all good things.

I cannot share the driving, eg, on holidays. Even taking appropriate breaks there more work for the driver than there would be with two drivers.

I don't drink but cannot be the designated driver.

I'm a musician and must rely on others to get me to and from rehearsal and gigs, or incur the added cost of a taxi.

I don't get out to see bands, colleagues, often on the other side of town, too far to cycle or take a taxi, or finishing when public transport options are dwindling, when I wouldn't feel safe.

The driving laws cause isolation and mental health problems, that's probably the worst impact of driving laws.

The parliament needs create laws that allow people who use prescribed medicinal cannabis to drive who are not impaired.