

The Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

To The Committee

In 2010 I was diagnosed with chordoma (spinal tumers). I underwent a world first, life saving procedure soon after my diagnosis. The tumer was successfully removed along with three vertabra in a marathon 43 hour procedure.

Since 2010, the tumers have shown to be recurrent, resulting in another 7 operations over the years 2011 to 2014, to remove the regrowths.

In 2013, after much deliberation, I consented to a mega dose of radiation, to attempt to stop the tumer growth by any other means than surgery.

Following the radiation treatment a scan found that 2 tumers were still present and attached to my sacrum. I have been made quite aware over these past few years, that chordoma is a terminal condition. I have also discovered through research that Cannabis Oil is being used successfully to treat tumers and many other types of cancer in many parts of the world right now, as you read this submission.

I am struggling to understand why my government is lagging so far behind other countries in the area of Medical Cannabis. For me personally, my governments lack of action may very well be a death sentence. I can only hope that a favourable decision is made while I am still in a position to be able to be treated. As you may well imagine from the operation reports and pictures of my rebuilt body, I suffer chronic pain every day of my life. I managed to survive at least 10 years on pain medications, in an attempt to overcome this pain. As I explained to my doctors, before I quit prescription medications altogether, in June 2014, the pain medications were not effective unless used in conjunction with cannabis. In this instance, I am talking about smoking cannabis, which for me personally is extremely effective in treating pain. Many others I have discussed pain with, find eating fresh cannabis or other edible cannabis products such as butter or cake are successful for them. The cannabis oil is also very effective with pain, but, because of the current laws, it is very difficult to obtain.

The reason I quit prescription medication was that they left me physically and psychologically unable to manage getting my child ready and dropped of at school, let alone deal with the many other issues required to live an acceptable existence. This is besides the fact that long term use of these medications definitely lead to other health problems, which will lead to a shorter life expectancy, a problem which will not occur with the use of cannabis. I also find it difficult to understand why the side effects of cannabis are constantly discussed, even though the side effects are not detrimental to my health, however the side effects of the prescription medications I was on are infinitely more damaging, even lethal in many circumstances.

I close with the message that, not only is my life resting on the decisions which are made concerning cannabis use in Australia, but my entire quality of life in the meantime is dependant again, on the decisions made concerning the use of cannabis in Australia.

I am available for comment at any time on the phone number above or by the email address on which we have already communicated. I also keenly await your very important decision on this matter.

Regards