

13/03/1015

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: legcon.sen@aph.gov.au
Regarding: The Moderator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2014

Dear Committee Delegates

As a member of the Australian public, I wish to submit my viewpoint on Medicinal Cannabis.

Considering the current research in the United States, Israel and some European countries – the evidence is overwhelming that Medicinal Cannabis has a strong place in our quest for health and sadly Australia is trailing way behind.

I feel that by changing our current legislation that we can personally and as a country as a whole benefit incredibly from re-legalising this incredible plant to assist those suffering unnecessarily. Not only can those in terrible pain and suffering find relief and even lessening of their illness, but there is a wonderful opportunity to grant this herb a place in local communities. Community is where true health and well-being lies and NOT in the hands of giant offshore pharmaceutical companies, but in the hands of local growers, manufacturers and distributors – creating jobs, productivity, better health and financial benefits. The financial benefits come from local produce, supporting local communities, transforming suffering, agriculture and relieving Australia's burdensome health costs.

I look forward to seeing the Committee seriously and positively respond to the Medicinal Bill for the benefit of all Australians.

My wife suffers from incurable Multiple Sclerosis, having been diagnosed with this terrible disease over 17 years ago. Our life has been very challenging ever since we were married some 38 years ago and then our first son being diagnosed with Duchene Muscular Dystrophy it came as a shock to us when started showing signs of MS. We lost our battle with the Muscular Dystrophy 10 years ago. lasted for 25 years.

Having someone within your immediate family battling an incurable disease and seeing first hand what my loving wife goes through on a daily basis, I wouldn't wish this on even my worst enemies.

Over the years has been on numerous MS drugs, she was on Betaferon for 8 years and painfully injected these toxic drugs into her body every other day. Then transitioning to Avonex another immunotherapy drug, then after a couple of years break her Neurologist put her on one of the new oral medications Tecfedera early last year. Unfortunately couldn't handle the side effects of Tecfedera. She stayed on it for only 3 weeks as her GP said that the medication was worse than the illness, with the intense stomach cramps and diarea. couldn't even get out of bed most days. Recently suffered another exacerbation and underwent a course of steroids. She has responded well to the therapy.

Apart from the toxic MS drugs prescribed to her she also uses a suite of other prescription drugs and over the counter pain medication. Although still ambulant and able to get around with a walking stick with my support she is doing fairly well.

I doubt if you are aware that the MS pharma drug market is now over \$14 Billion (worldwide) with around 12 highly priced drugs subsidised by Medicare for use in Australia. This list is set to expand with many more new drugs currently being used or under clinical trials around the world. Australia

has some 23,000 sufferers of MS out of a worldwide total of approximately 2,500,000. The drug market for MS is huge and growing.

Unfortunately at the end of the day, the best one can achieve is around 30% less flare ups by taking these expensive drugs. None of these so called miracle drugs even look like curing this terrible disease but they certainly come with a plethora of dreadful side effects. Including but not limited to possible Liver disease, kidney failure, (progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy PML) and even death.

With all the media attention being given to medicinal cannabis it was brought to our attention that medicinal cannabis may be a help for MS symptoms. We managed to get a small quantity of medicinal cannabis for her to try. The results were astounding. Her pain levels decreased and the use of over the counter pain killers was reduced almost completely. Now we are all aware of the amount of deaths tied to over use of pain medication so it was a relief to us both that something so safe could help with her pain symptoms.

This letter is regarding the legalisation of medical cannabis. We need to do it NOW...not in 5 years time after 9 million dollars worth of clinical trials that will not find anything different to every other clinical trial conducted around the world.

Additionally there is another therapy that is having incredible success in treating MS. It is CCSVI If you haven't read about it perhaps it deserves your attention. Instead of spending millions of dollars on MS immunotherapy drugs perhaps the Government needs to re-assess other modes of therapy.

Click on this link for an update: <http://ccsviinms.blogspot.com.au/2015/02/cerebral-circulation-2x-slower-in.html>

In a placebo-controlled, 2007 study in the journal [Neurology](#), Abrams and his colleagues found that marijuana is effective at reducing neuropathic pain, or pain caused by damaged nerves, in HIV patients. Opiates, such as morphine, aren't effective at treating that sort of pain. Abrams said.

In another study, they found that marijuana, in addition to opiates, led to dramatic levels of pain relief. (Animal models have found similar effects).

"Cannabinoids plus opiates are synergistic in their relief of pain, so that 1+1 = 5 and not 2," Abrams told Live Science.

Researchers at the American Academy of Neurology have also found that medical marijuana in the form of pills or oral sprays seemed to reduce stiffness and muscle spasms in MS. The medications also eased certain symptoms of MS, such as pain related to spasms, and painful burning and numbness, as well as overactive bladder, according to the study published in the journal Neurology.

Reference: <http://www.livescience.com/24554-medical-marijuana.html>

WAKE UP AUSTRALIA! Medicinal Cannabis = Better Quality of Life for Millions of Australians...The sick and suffering and their loved ones!!!