

4th March 2015

Support to Pass Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2014

I agree a Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis needs to be established to ensure that medical Cannabis is available to those who may benefit from it. Until such time the regulator is established carers and patients deemed as candidates for medical cannabis usage should be allowed to use it without fear of prosecution.

There are many reasons I feel this way, the first of which is my special needs son. Fortunately he is not currently experiencing life threatening seizures but I do remember the battle we had when he was a baby to get Infantile Spasm seizures under control. There is a strong chance he will develop another seizure disorder and I would want the option to use Medical Cannabis if the situation warranted it.

Secondly, I have seen many children suffer from uncontrolled seizures. Some end up with reduced brain function from:

- the barrage of medication they must endure
- or the loss of oxygen to their brain (if they have stopped breathing during a seizure)
- or from hitting their head during seizures such as drop seizures.

Some children overseas have become seizure free from using Medical Cannabis when nothing else has worked. In my opinion, we need to give these children and their families as much help as we can.

Thirdly, it comes down to the bottom line. The high cost of health care. Many of the drugs these kids are given cost a small fortune, not to mention that in some circumstances a seizure means:

- an ambulance is required to transport the child to hospital,
- emergency room staff are required to stabilise them
- emergency seizure medication
- and possibly a hospital admission.

None of the above comes cheap. Plus there is a follow-on cost involved as the parents end up with depression, anxiety and stress related disorders resulting from their inability to help their child, from seeing their child suffering during seizures, having to be a “medical practitioner” rather than a parent and from their constant state of alert “waiting” for a seizure and needing to be ready to do what is required to stabilise them. The potential cost savings of all these resources need to be considered and used as support for passing the bill