

To whom it may concern.

My name is

I am a 28 yo injured veteran who served 8 yrs in the Australian Army Reserves and this is my personal submission.

I was brought up told that cannabis was a gateway drug and it causes harm but was never told what harm, just the usual "drugs are bad" speech.

However I was wrong, the people telling me it was bad were wrong, we were all fooled that this plant was harmful with no benefit and now with the internet, social media and freedom of information we can educate ourselves properly instead of listening to what people want us to hear.

My experience with cannabis has been nothing but responsible and positive as is my human right to make my own decisions on my own health and what i consume. Just as if i chose to smoke tobacco or drink alcohol or have a coffee. Caffeine is another widely used, if not the biggest, legal drug in the world today with known side effects and related deaths yet is legal. Preservatives in our food that derive from petroleum such as additives and preservatives that are bad for our health, yet we choose to consume them (probably without knowing).

Processed meat can cause bowel cancer, yes it's still legal.

Legal pharmaceutical such as ibuprofen or codeine are legal, still abused and can kill, yet we choose to take them.

To be honest water is more dangerous then cannabis. As to date, cannabis has not killed 1 person directly.

But, only with cannabis and how it's consumed is relatively harmless and in my experience have witnessed only positives.

My wife ingests pure cannabis daily, no tobacco, for her crohn's disease. It stimulates her appetite so she can eat, minimises pain from cramping unlike any pharmaceutical she has ever had.

Before cannabis she lost 27kgs and couldn't eat. She was wasting away to nothing. Pharmaceutical's were either doing nothing to help or they were making her feel worse. The more she used pharmaceuticals, the more weight she lost. When she had cannabis, her symptoms reduced and she was able to eat, really well.

She has currently put on 5kgs and she is in remission, until we run out.

She has been on 5 or 6 anti nausea medications at one time and was on codeine for the pain with side effects such as increased pain, mood swings, irritability, constipation, night sweats. How can you not say cannabis is a safer alternative with an estimated 100 deaths a year on codeine in Australia according to the TGA.

Not to mention the 115 deaths a day in america on opioids.

My wife and I both consume cannabis on a daily basis for the last 3 or so years for her condition and mine. I was on anti depressants and codeine for my back for 3 years and it was making me worse as in dependence, mood swings depressive thoughts and suicide.

With not only dealing with my back injury from the army and depression and my wife's crohn's disease we now may have to deal with authorities knocking on our door to arrest us. We are only healing ourselves with no harm to anyone.

Not saying cannabis doesn't have risks, it does like everything else but they can be greatly if not eradicated if we are educated like not mixing with tobacco or ingesting instead of smoking.

I have written to the state health minister, Jill Hennessy, the federal health minister, Greg hunt, the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull and to the TGA itself but, to no avail.

The TGA's SAS is a complete and utter joke and I can't stress enough how useless and uncompassionate the system is. With now only 1000 people getting access to medicinal cannabis since the scheme started, with estimated hundreds of thousands of Australians trying to get on the scheme is outrageous and should be overturned immediately. It causes the black market to flourish and would be even cheaper still then to get a legal prescription. If your desperate, like us, it's a no brainer. The TGA does more harm then good on this issue.

Available research is their excuse, that "it isn't researched enough", is absolute nonsense.

Cannabis is now, if not the most researched, hot item there is. There are hundreds if not thousands of published trials and studies on this plant especially from Israel but the TGA does not want to acknowledge overseas studies. Instead they want to reinvent the wheel, so to speak.

The only 3 ways to get legal assess is:

1. Be in a clinical trial, (good luck)
2. Get a authorised prescriber. Which isn't publicly available so no one can find them I've written to the TGA to get the list under FOI. Which they denied,
3. Cat A and B which needs your doctors approval and approval of a specialist. Which I've come across are bias and disregard cannabis with only one accepting it's value.

Cannabis is a alternative medicine and has been used therapeutically for thousands of years and has been legal and used longer then it has been illegal the past 80 or so years of Prohibition.

So why are uneducated doctors in charge of prescribing something they only have been brought up through their training knowing cannabis is only addictive and causes "harm"?

That's why there are only 1000 people getting access and its to slow while people are suffering.

This is for the people like my wife and myself to have a quality of life, with no harm to anyone.

And the difference between medicinal and recreational cannabis is nothing its the same thing.

It's now time to be on par with the world and accept people will do what they want.

They won't be controlled all we can do is harm minimisation with better education and inform the people the benefits and the associated risks and let people decide for themselves and not be spoon fed from the government for "our own safety".

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Thank you for taking the time to read my submission

Regards