

Online submission to the Victorian Law Reform Commission

MEDICINAL CANNABIS REFERENCE

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Name	JB
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Question 1	<p>Which of the following considerations should determine whether there are exceptional circumstances for medicinal cannabis to be made available to a patient:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the circumstances of the patient(b) the state of clinical knowledge about the efficacy or potential efficacy of using cannabis in treating the patient's condition(c) both of the above?
Response	<p>all of the above.</p> <p>I do not believe that only terminal patients should have access to medicinal cannabis. children with epilepsy, chronic illnesses ie diabetics, can also benefit from medicinal cannabis, chronic arthritis sufferers, people who suffer migraines, eating disorders - the benefits are endless and people are dying every day because they cannot legally access medicinal cannabis.</p>
Question 2	<p>For what conditions is there sufficient knowledge of the therapeutic benefits, dangers, risks and side effects of cannabis to justify allowing sufferers to use it lawfully in Victoria?</p>
Response	<p>Childhood epilepsy</p> <p>Cancer - many people have taken medicinal cannabis illegally with outstanding results (people will continue to take it, whether legal or not, people do not want to die, just because it is illegal doesn't mean people will stop sourcing this.</p> <p>Diabetics with excruciating neuropathic pain, assists in lower Blood Glucose Levels.</p> <p>Reduces depression and the need for antidepressants which all have side effects, therefore less suicidal tendencies..</p> <p>Bipolar patients being able to have quality of life.</p> <p>Dangers are people without knowledge taking medicinal cannabis without being well informed and educated on dosages etc.</p> <p>Aren't we all entitled to live a good healthy life, free from pain.</p>
Question 3	<p>What special considerations, if any, justify access to medicinal cannabis for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) patients who are under 18 years of age(b) patients who lack capacity by reason of age or another disability (other than youth) to consent to using medicinal cannabis?
Response	<p>Under supervision of a GP and parent / legal guardian with regular check ups to monitor progress on medicinal cannabis.</p>

Question 4	On which of the following should the law creating a medicinal cannabis scheme base a person's eligibility to use medicinal cannabis: (a) a list of medical conditions (b) a list of symptoms (c) a list of symptoms arising from certain medical conditions (d) evidence that all reasonable conventional treatments have been tried and failed?
Response	Some patients do not cope with traditional medications. Deciding who should be allowed access to medicinal cannabis should be on a patient by patient basis. All cases treated on their merits and not an umbrella decision affecting all people with the same condition.
Question 5	Should there be a way to allow for special cases where a person who is otherwise ineligible may use medicinal cannabis? If so, what should that be?
Response	On a case by case assessment. Doctors can already administer and prescribe some very dangerous drugs, medicinal cannabis is far less dangerous than many of them ie chemotherapy, morphine. Cytotoxic drugs that harm all cells in the body in comparison to medicinal cannabis that kills cancer cells and protects all other cells.
Question 6	If Victoria acted through a state agency, in what circumstances would it be legally entitled to establish a medicinal cannabis scheme which manufactured cannabis products without breaching the terms of the <i>Therapeutic Drugs Act 1989 (Cth)</i> or the <i>Narcotic Drugs Act 1967 (Cth)</i> ?
Response	no comment
Question 7	Are the regulatory objectives identified by the Commission appropriate? What changes, if any, would you make to them?
Response	no comment
Question 8	Would the creation of a defence to prosecution for authorised patients and carers in possession of small amounts of dried cannabis or cannabis products be an adequate way of providing for people to be treated with medicinal cannabis in exceptional circumstances?
Response	Just make it legal then there would be no need for a defence for someone who is simply trying to save their own life!
Question 9	What mechanism should Victoria use to regulate the cultivation of medicinal cannabis?
Response	The public should be permitted to cultivate a certain amount for their own personal use or that for a person they are caring for. Maybe via a permit or licencing system just as we have to provide evidence to claim for disability or carer payments. There should be permits available to growers on a larger scale who can provide to those who are unable to grow their own for whatever reason ie space. living arrangements etc.
Question 10	What approach, or approaches, should Victoria take to regulating how medicinal cannabis is processed and distributed?
Response	Comment withheld.

Question 11	How should the Victorian medicinal cannabis scheme interact with the national arrangements for the control of therapeutic products under therapeutic goods legislation and narcotic drugs legislation?
Response	A guideline should be drawn up as with all other medications. It should not be listed as a narcotic nor an S4 or S8 rather than an alternative therapy for the cure of many cancers and pain in patients with chronic illness.
Question 12	What responsibilities should be given to health practitioners in authorising a patient's use of medicinal cannabis?
Response	To provide educational material to a patient outlining the benefits, advantages, disadvantages, side effects (if any), dosages, follow up appointments to ascertain the benefits and progress of the patient after commencing medicinal cannabis. As per any other drug that a healthcare professional would provide their patient in their overall client focussed care.
Question 13	Who should have the authority to assess whether a patient is an appropriate candidate to be treated with medicinal cannabis: (a) all registered medical practitioners (b) certain designated specialist medical practitioners (c) registered health practitioners who have prescribing entitlements (d) a subset of these?
Response	all registered practitioners on a case by case assessment.
Question 14	What requirements, restrictions, guidance or other assistance should health practitioners be given in monitoring a patient's use of medicinal cannabis?
Response	as per all other medications they prescribe.
Question 15	What additional restrictions or requirements, if any, should apply to patients who are vulnerable by reason of age or lack of capacity, so as to provide adequate protection for their welfare?
Response	I believe this question has already been answered.
Question 16	In what form(s) should medicinal cannabis be permitted to be supplied and used?
Response	Tincture Cannabis oil Leaf, trim, plant (for personal use) all available forms
Question 17	In what ways could Victoria's medicinal cannabis scheme keep pace with, and contribute to, clinical research into the therapeutic uses of cannabis and other changes in scientific knowledge, medical practices and technology?
Response	Conduct trials in all areas immediately or have patients accurately document their use under the supervision of a GP who can assess the results and a central database where those findings are sent. It would become blatantly obvious, the benefits after a very short period of time.