

Online submission to the Victorian Law Reform Commission

MEDICINAL CANNABIS REFERENCE

Number	20
Name	Vic Camilleri
Date	1 April 2015

Question 1	Which of the following considerations should determine whether there are exceptional circumstances for medicinal cannabis to be made available to a patient: (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	C
Question 2	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?
Response	The conditions should be determined by more than one doctor regarding the capability of the patient's pain acceptability and the possibility of any side effects. I have a friend with MS in extreme pain. Various pain killers have not helped. I am praying that medicinal cannabis is available for him before it is too late.
Question 3	What special considerations, if any, justify access to medicinal cannabis for: (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	Same answer as (2) above.
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	(C) and (D)
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	Same as (2) and (4) above.

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</i> (Cth) or the <i>Narcotic Drugs Act 1967</i> (Cth)?
Response	Sorry don't know.
Question 7	Are the regulatory objectives identified by the Commission appropriate? What changes, if any, would you make to them?
Response	Sorry don't know.
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	Yes as long as (2) and (4) above are undertaken.
Question 9	What mechanism should Victoria use to regulate the cultivation of medicinal cannabis?
Response	Sorry, don't know
Question 10	What approach, or approaches, should Victoria take to regulating how medicinal cannabis is processed and distributed?
Response	The approval of two doctors and distributed via chemists like other drugs.
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	Sorry, don't know
Question 12	What responsibilities should be given to health practitioners in authorising a patient's use of medicinal cannabis?
Response	The same as the issuing of other drugs but in this case I am advocating the approval from two doctors.
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	Initially (b) and then after monitoring the process for a set time it is released to (a).
Question 14	What requirements, restrictions, guidance or other assistance should health practitioners be given in monitoring a patient's use of medicinal cannabis?
Response	A second doctor is required to be involved. On-going monitoring of the patient and periodical reports forward to a central government body which reports to parliament.

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	Medication should be administered by doctors to patients that are vulnerable for any reason.
Question 16	In what form(s) should medicinal cannabis be permitted to be supplied and used?
Response	What ever form is the cheapest to manufacture.
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	If patient reports are forthcoming State wide, the overall picture can contribute greatly to research into the therapeutic uses of cannabis.