

Submission to the Victorian Law Reform Commission

MEDICINAL CANNABIS REFERENCE

Number	73
Name	Ivan Schparyk
Date	02 June 2015

Dear Sir/s

I am writing to about how my own experiences, ideas about forming a framework for Medical Cannabis use in Victoria.

Let me preface this by telling you that I and my wife have been charged with Cultivation and Possession of cannabis, with the worst part being the amount of ~40kg. We were convinced by Legal Aid(West Heidelberg) that our charges were minor, without revealing or investigating the amount or implications. On court day, the judge, with no alternative, warned us against proceeding, as we were obviously unprepared. At no stage were we told that the charges implied we were facing sanctions of Commercial quantity seriousness. This is a situation many valid Medical Cannabis(MC) users/growers may encounter, if faced with contesting possible charges in MC cases. I feel the framework proposed must challenge and account for this area of current DPCA statutes. In considering this framework, the question of 'Gateway drug ' and use by minors should be treated with equal and to an extent conjoined seriousness. My experience has shown me there is a case for strict age limits on allowing MM use, as social and economic factors seem to combine in the step up to more serious drug use. The use of MC or Cannabis products should be available to parents treating their children, given there is evidence other treatments have been unsuccessful. I feel this is an area needing strict accordance and accountability, as the social backlash from any misdeeds would be damaging to the whole MC debate.

As to how to do this, I honestly feel an allowable quantity to be grown by users and a limited number of Commercial enterprises is the only possible starting point. People who need MC need it now. Down the track, legislation can address any income the state may feel it is owed. A general licence should be given to Medical practitioners, allowing them to prescribe a patient MC. The patient should be allowed to Cultivate or buy MC in accordance with his doctors advice.

Thank you for accepting/reading my submission

Ivan Schparyk