

Submission to the Victorian Law Reform Commission

MEDICINAL CANNABIS REFERENCE

Number	81
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Good morning,

I appreciate that submissions are no longer being accepted but I am writing in the hope that you will be open to hearing our story and experience with cannabis therapy.

Early last year our son suffered a drug induced psychotic event when as per his neurologists advice we increased one of his anti convulsant medications (He was at that time taking three medications for Epilepsy)

His behaviours spiralled out of control, he was jumping out of moving vehicles and attacking us and his support workers with intent to harm. He was extremely frustrated all of the time. We had to keep him at home, locked in the house as it was too dangerous for us to let him leave. We could not touch him, shower him, or even tuck him into bed at night.

Further consultation with neurologist we were advised to taper back that increase, which we did with no improvement.

We then were advised to decrease one of his other medications (as it causes insomnia and has done the whole time Jeremy has been on it – seventeen years) because Jeremy was going weeks on end with NO sleep. His behaviours worsened, his sleep patterns did not improve and still he seized.

We played around with doses and levels of all of his medications as per the neurologists recommendations, nothing worked.

In desperation we contacted the neurologist, he suggested we start sedation medications.

We refused, and told him that before we tried anything else we would be trialling cannabis. Which we did. We were gifted one small bottle of tincture. Almost immediately we saw improvements, his sleep patterns, behaviours and seizures were all much more tolerable!

We knew then that we must find a way to source cannabis medicines to give him the best possible chance at a fulfilling life. We purchased a bottle of cannabis oil through an acquaintance. Even at the low doses he was having at that time it was evident that cannabis was the best and safest treatment for all of Jeremy's symptoms.

Then the supply stopped. We searched high and low for another source. We are not financially well off as my husband is recently totally incapacitated for work, we could not afford to pay the prices that many people were paying for cannabis oils.

Naturally we were desperate. We knew cannabis worked for Jeremy, but we had no way of gaining a supply for him.

In September last year we made the only decision that would work for us and make cannabis medicines available to Jeremy, we ordered seeds online and started to grow cannabis.

If we had not have taken that risk to grow his medicine I doubt Jeremy would still be living here at home with us. If he was, he would have been heavily sedated .. that is no life for any young man.

Jeremy has been at the end of the line for available treatment for his seizures for years. We have been forced to wait for the next anti convulsant to be available on the market.

ALL of the anti convulsants he has trialled have failed to control his seizures, ALL of them have caused unwanted side effects – some of the very serious.

Cannabis is the first medicine we have been able to offer him that is both safe and effective.

But until such time as our Government allows cannabis medicines to be used, what are we to do?

Watch our son slowly die? Watch the medications put him at risk every day for the rest of his life?

Growing his cannabis is the only way we can source his medicine. We know it is safe, we know it is grown without chemicals; pesticides or herbicides. We know that his medicine is natural and safe because we make it ourselves.

His neurologist, his General Practitioner, his Pharmacist and his Government have all failed Jeremy. Nothing else has worked, and we as his parents are doing the only thing we know how to and that is love our son enough to save him. We are breaking the law to save his life, but there are no choices left.

If we do not grow his cannabis he will endure suffering until he passes away. It is not a choice any parent should have to or wants to make, to choose law over life!

We live in Tasmania, naturally we cannot make it to the consultations. We are more than happy to be contacted by phone however so you may hear our experience if you choose to do so. I have included the link to a short video which captures some of Jeremy's life.

We can be contacted on the number below.

Warm regards,

Lyn Cleaver

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ok2Z3SQZ4a4&feature=youtu.be>