



The Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics

Response to the Inquiry into the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018

The Lambert Initiative is a philanthropically-funded medical cannabis scientific research group within the University of Sydney. Our aim is to optimise safe and effective cannabinoid therapeutics into mainstream medicine in Australia and beyond to deliver benefits for patients and to alleviate human suffering.

We support any attempts to simplify and streamline access to medical cannabis products where clinically appropriate. We support the repeal of the Public Health (Medicinal Cannabis) Act 2016 and subsequent amendments to the Health Act 1937.

Empowering all specialist doctors with the authority to request a prescription of an unapproved medical cannabis product is a significant improvement on the current Queensland framework. However, we are concerned that doctors who are not specialists will continue to be restricted in this capacity.

Our published research (Karanges EA, et al. *BMJ Open* 2018;8) has found that significant numbers of Australian general practitioners, some of whom are not members of the RACGP, are receiving enquiries from their patients on a regular basis about medical cannabis. We also found that there is significant support among general practitioners for the use of cannabis medicines in clinical practice.

Given that the Therapeutic Goods Administration will be assessing the clinical justification and physician suitability of all Special Access Scheme Category B requests, and given that any Authorised Prescribers will have their suitability assessed by a human research ethics committee or College, we argue that it is unnecessary to retain additional state-specific restrictions on this class of doctors.

Sincerely,

Rhys Cohen

Senior Project Officer



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THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Brain and Mind Centre | Level 6 MO2F | 94 Mallett Street | CAMPERDOWN | NSW | 2050