

4th July 2016

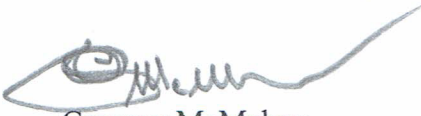
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My submission into Public Health (Medicinal Cannabis) Bill 2016

1. I wish to address what is Peripheral Neuropathy? its causes from a consumer/sufferer perspective, with my view of supporting the State Government's Medicinal Cannabis Bill of 2016.
The causes of Peripheral Neuropathy known to most as Neuropathic pain are Diabetes, Alcoholism (Nutritional Deficiency), HIV, Chemotherapy, Prescription drugs, Toxins, back surgery, and includes facial nerve problems, Multiple sclerosis, Singles, and Fibromyalgia to name just a few. Severe neuropathic pain has proved difficult to treat and evidence suggests that no available prescription drug is effective in more than 40% of patients. Thus this represents an area of significant unmet clinical need.
2. Medical Cannabis clinical trials of cannabis as an analgesic in neuropathic pain have shown cannabis to successfully reduce the intensity of pain and the therapy of vapourisation may be less harmful than smoking, as it can be heated below the point of combustion where carcinogens are formed.
Not all sufferers with neuropathic pain will benefit from medicinal cannabis, like all prescription medicines what works for one may not work for another.
3. Many prescription drugs are known to be dangerous. Pharmaceuticals in general are among the leading causes of deaths/over doses in the world. The side effects of prescription drugs to treat Neuropathic pain are generally worse than the original disease and lead to further creation of other medical conditions.
4. How do we prescribe Medicinal Cannabis?
To my limited knowledge, (a) Vaporisation, * vaporised cannabis mitigates pain intensity at the medium dose of 3.53 – 4 % (THC), or via a Mouth spray similar to if not the same as "Sativex" presently TGA approved for Multiple Sclerosis to alleviate spasticity, however approved overseas also for neuropathic pain. (1)
5. **Production**, is the government aware that Pharmaceutical Company, Cannabis Producer 'AusCann' has become the first Australian company to be granted a licence to grow and export medicinal cannabis from Norfolk Island to Canada and internationally? There are rumours that have have applied for approval to grow cannabis on Christmas Island too? If we Australia will eventually approve Medicinal Cannabis why hasn't Auscann been approached? (2)
Affordability? If approved, Medicinal Cannabis Affordability should be the Government's first priority. As many sufferer's will be pensioners and veterans.
6. Cannabis Safety, Reviews of medicinal cannabis used under essentially controlled conditions indicate that the frequencies of both side effects and dependence are low. One specific review on side effects reported that they were modest, with only 10% of patients choosing to discontinue their treatment. A greater incidence was found for cannabis over placebo treatment for disorientation (4% v 0.5%), disturbance in attention (3.7% v 0.1%), feeling drunk (2.9% v 0.4%), euphoric mood (2.2% v 0.9%), depression (1.9% v 0.8%), memory impairment (1.4% v 0.1%) and dissociation (1.7% v 0.1%). Tolerance

did not develop, and the review concluded that abuse or dependence “is likely to occur in only a very small proportion of recipients”. (3)

7. **Restriction by Prescription/access**, I feel that from a consumers perspective that the only persons that should be approved to prescribed Medicinal Cannabis should be *A Pain Specialist, * Neurologist and a *Psychiatrist or one or two in combination with the Psychiatrist.
8. Finally I would like to see on the Advisory Committee a Clinical Pharmacologist, Pain Specialist in Neuropathic Pain, a Neurologist and definitely a Psychiatrist (suggestion only Dr John Gibson of the Keith Payne Veterans Psychiatric Unit at Greenslopes Private Hospital would be of great value).



Gregory McMahon

References;

- (1) Nabiximols, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nabiximols>
- (2) <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-05-21/norfolk-island-medical-marijuana-calls-to-legalise/6486906>
- (3) Robson P. Abuse potential and psychoactive effects of -9-tetrahydrocannabinol and cannabidiol oromucosal spray (Sativex), a new cannabinoid medicine. Expert Opin Drug Saf 2011; 10: 675-685