

Department of Health

Therapeutic Goods Administration

Sent via email to: medicines.scheduling@health.gov.au

Submission: *Proposed Amendments to the Poisons Standard (Medicines/Chemicals)*

Dear Secretary,

Thank you for the opportunity for public submission regarding the down scheduling of cannabidiol (CBD). I support the rescheduling of Cannabidiol to Schedule 3.

I have personally had major depressive disorder and been under my GP's supervision for over 20 years. During this time, I have been on many different prescription medications. Over the years having many reactions to different prescription medications and continual major depressive episodes.

I came across CBD whilst overseas when I injured my shoulder and began taking it for its anti-inflammatory effects. It was while taking it for this reason I noticed that my mental health had improved dramatically, I was having less anxiety my depression improved to the point I was able to halve my prescription medication. During the time I had my shoulder injury and subsequent operation I was taking Opioid medication, OTC when it was available and also, I was prescribed Endone. This medication is addicting. It was causing my depression to worsen; the pain was getting no better and I needed to take more and more as my tolerance went up. On a few occasions my breathing slowed down to the point that my partner was extremely concerned for my health. The CBD helped my pain to where I was only taking Panadol. I have also realised that when using CBD during my period that the pain is markedly reduced as are my symptoms of PMS.

I strongly believe from experience that CBD has a place in the toolkit for mental health and physical injury. The ability to make this choice for my own health is important to me. The current scheduling makes the choice difficult. It is expensive to go to a "cannabis doctor" and the list of disorders is limiting. GP's are not confident enough to prescribe CBD and therefore send patients to cannabis doctors. Distance and money put a barrier in place. I spend more time at the Doctor's, getting more prescriptions which, themselves have side effects.

I see from researching the availability of CBD in the US and Europe it's a safe alternative to many other medications we are prescribed.

Dosage and labelling are important, Australian consumers need access to education to make an informed choice. By educating our GP's and pharmacists they are able to ask the right questions quickly and give advice on how to take the CBD concomitantly with other drugs. This also gives us the opportunity to see how people react and add to the data.

OTC therapeutic products are an essential, effective and convenient component of Australia's healthcare system. On pack labelling and information is critical for CBD to give the consumer and health care professionals the information to self-select their therapeutic product.

For me personally to be able to access CBD at a pharmacy it will reduce the cost association with seeing a cannabis dr (up to \$600) hopefully lower the cost of pharmaceutical CBD \$250 for 30

days travel costs, time and stigma. There is stigma attached to CBD. For the stigma to change we need to educate the public and CBD needs to be more widely available.

I agree that CBD should be down scheduled to a schedule 3. This takes pressure off GP's and enables the public to be in charge of their own health and to have the opportunity to use CBD in as part of their toolkit to wellness.

Whilst it is great to have a pharmacist to ensure that CBD isn't affecting patients using other prescription medication, it has not shown to be necessary in the US, Europe and the UK.

Australia is behind in scheduling and while I don't think it should be scheduled at all, a schedule 3 opens up the benefits to more Australians and gives us the opportunity to see how the public react and add to the data to create a more informed government and public.

I hope for the future of all Australians we are able to use this opportunity to see that CBD has many benefits and should really be available just as any other health supplement.

