

From: Inquiry into the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017 [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 April 2017 2:37 PM
To: injectingcentrebill
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017

Mr Nicholas Wallis

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Dear Committee,

My submission to this inquiry will be short. A supervised injecting centre in Melbourne has been required since academics first began calling for it as a response to the various problems associated with heroin injection in the late 1980s and 1990s.

The Sydney centre at Kings Cross has been successful at reducing deaths, reducing load on emergency workers in the area and reducing the flow-on effects of street injecting (needle waste, intoxicated people on the streets etc.)

It is a model which not only has precedence in Sydney, but also in a number of other countries. The success of this model has been proven time and time again.

The vast majority of people choose to use a psychoactive substance at some point in their lives. Most use alcohol, while a smaller portion choose to use other psychoactive substances, many which have been prohibited in our society.

The arbitrary prohibition of a range of psychoactive substances seems to have caused more harm than benefit to society.

Whether or not more people would try alternative psychoactive substances and fall into harms way if prohibition didn't exist is unclear, but evidence from places where there are different policies appears to suggest the effect is minimal. This suggests that many of the pillars which uphold prohibition cause more harm to the individual and community than the substances themselves.

This is certainly the case for those who inject drugs, as they tend to be the most marginalised, even among

the broad drug-using communities. The visibility of a small portion of injecting drug users, especially those with mental health problems and those sleeping rough cause a situation where it is easy to stigmatise all injecting drug users through stereotyping.

A safe injecting centre will be able to assist not only those most visible and vulnerable, but also the hidden majority of people who are injecting drug users. Providing access to support services and medical supervision has been shown to lower harms and be more helpful for those who wish to work toward total abstinence from the substance to do so.

I support the introduction of this trial and expect it will produce positive results for the community.

Kind regards,

-Nick Wallis

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File1:

File2:

File3: