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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 10 March 2021 11:29 AM
To: Inquiry into the Use of Cannabis in Victoria
Subject: Submission

Categories: Submission (to be processed)

Hi, unfortunately the web form repeatedly would not submit, and didn't say why.

Here is my submission:

[REDACTED]

I believe strongly that recreational cannabis use should be legalised and regulated. Cannabis is not a harmless substance or something that is healthful to use in large amounts or with high frequency, however it is safer than already legal regulated substances such as alcohol. As a provisional psychologist and mental healthcare worker, I have seen alcohol and other drugs do far more harm than cannabis, and many of my clients with severe trauma or psychiatric histories have relied on cannabis to get them through the day, and counterbalance the side effects of psychiatric medications. It shouldn't be a long term answer, but often it is necessary in the short term, and to be frank in the long term when all other approaches fail, which they sometimes do. I have also known a number of my highly capable and successful colleagues use cannabis recreationally, with only positive outcomes. Legalising cannabis would allow regulation of cannabis and ease of access, making it less appealing for consumers to buy from illegal drug dealers, in turn lowering the incentive for drug dealers and criminal gangs to trade in this product. People would be safer if they could obtain cannabis without interacting with these segments of society, and without the incentive to sell hopefully there would be fewer selling, making legal dispensaries effectively the only place to buy cannabis, making it harder for minors to obtain cannabis. Legalising would also help to keep vulnerable people (most people who use large amounts of cannabis experience disadvantage, be it socio-economic, physical health, or mental health) from unnecessary interactions with police and out of the court system. I don't believe the rate of cannabis use would rise dramatically if recreational use were legalised, and the benefits of moving towards this model far outweigh any downsides.

Interest in the inquiry:

- Individual
- working in public health sector

Age 21-30

⋮ Social impacts

⋮ Mental health

⋮ Public safety

⋮ Young people and children

⋮ Accessing and using cannabis

⋮ Public health

⋮ Criminal activity

⋮ Education

Do you think there should be restrictions on the
(select all that apply)

- Use of cannabis should remain legal for personal use only.
- Sale should remain illegal.
- Personal use of cannabis should be decriminalised (Decriminalised: there are no criminal or civil penalties for possession of a small amount of cannabis for personal use or a person is referred to a drug diversion program or treatment service)
- Personal use of cannabis should remain illegal.
- Personal use of cannabis should be legal and regulated.
- Sale of cannabis should be legal and regulated.
- Cultivation of cannabis for personal use should be legal and regulated.
- There should be no restrictions.
- Other – please explain.

Unregulated sale of small amounts of cannabis should be legalised or decriminalised (e.g., selling of a very small amount grown for personal use)

Please remove my name from the submission before publishing.

Warm regards,

[REDACTED]