

Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Drag the statements below to reorder them. In order of priority, please rank the themes you believe are most important for this Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria to consider:

Accessing and using cannabis, Public health, Education, Social impacts, Mental health, Young people and children, Public safety, Criminal activity

What best describes your interest in our Inquiry? (select all that apply) :

Individual, Working in the alcohol and drug services sector, Working in the health sector

Are there any additional themes we should consider?

YOUR SUBMISSION

This is a long time overdue and welcome conversation. Looking to other countries that have legalised the sale and use of cannabis will guide the inquiry to validate beneficial outcomes being experienced now in states in the USA and Canada (being the most recent to make policy change). People can access cannabis easily for proven medicinal gain/relief and for recreational purposes, without being deemed criminals. The legalisation has taken the weight out of the judicial system, reduced the stigma of cannabis and its users, provides natural approaches to western medicine that has not reached its full potential and has created a revenue to the state that is sustainable. We have not seen reports that the USA and Canada are experiencing an uprise in illegal behaviours, society has not degraded itself and children have not become child addicts. Crime has reduced, a new healthy and thriving economy has risen, tax's are paid and the local communities are benefiting. Countries such as the Netherlands, and Spain have proven that reducing the harms associated by stigma attached to illegal activities has a positive impact on society - people feel that they have more autonomy, freedom in their choices. Healthy choices by Healthy people.

Medicinal cannabis is effective in reducing inflammation, for its relaxation and sedative affects. To have the choice of pharmaceutical medicines or natural plant based medicines should be all of societies choice, whenever needed. It seems a waste of time and energy to provide a script of manmade pharmaceuticals to a unwell person, and wait until all else fails..to then provide the option of cannabis (as a last resort) - often to take the pain away. The plant that has 1000's of years of historical input; been used by all communities of nearly all countries in the world for healing and ceremonial gatherings; that withstands the tests of time for its value; can be used for a wide variety of uses (building materials/paper/health and nutrition) and is a sustainable resource to farmers, it should be given its opportunity for maximum potential.

I have nearly 2 decades of working within the YOUTH AOD and Mental Health sector, and can honestly say that addiction and poor mental health associated purely to cannabis alone stands out as a very low percent-age of health service consumers. If the use of cannabis was legalised / decriminalised - our society would not see a spike in youth drug use, but would see an accurate snapshot of what is currently being used. Right now in Victoria, we have thousands of young people using cannabis every day and would be seen as crimi-nals.. they are not criminals, they are young people with futures ahead of them.

I have 2 teenage children, and speak to them about substance use - alcohol and all and every other drug out there. They are informed, but not only by me - but by the internet. They are informed because they have been able to read about it, research it, talk to their mates about it and find our very quickly if it is something

they want to get into = the digital age has delivered and more! The young people of today are discerning, they can made informed decisions and are not walking into a minefield of choices with blindfolds on.

Cannabis is not a complicated plant, but the compounds that plant produces can be. Without being able to research the plant more, the current benefits that can be experienced without a psychoactive component(of THC) is highlighted by the sudden uptake of CBD in the medicinal world, and in a variety of forms sold now in the USA/Canada etc.

Why can't our community extend itself to be progressive like other countries around the world? The fear is mis founded, and perpetuated by its illegal status. Alcohol remains our biggest legal substance - and our biggest silent killer.

Regulated and possession for self use would be a great thing to see here in Victoria, ahead of all other states that would quickly follow suit.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

Select all that apply.

Do you think there should there be restrictions on the use of cannabis? :

Personal use of cannabis should be decriminalised.

(Decriminalised: there are no criminal or civil penalties instead a person is referred to a drug diversion program or other health/ treatment service), Personal use of cannabis should be legal. Sale of cannabis should be legal and regulated. Cultivation of cannabis for personal use should be legal. There should be no restrictions.