

Inquiry into the use of Cannabis in Victoria

██████████
Organisation Name:
Your position or role:

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::

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

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

Individual

Are there any additional themes we should consider?

Treatment of people with a dual diagnosis.

Select all that apply. Do you think there should 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)

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

Dear Committee,

My family has a history of alcoholism which I have traced back for five generations though family history research. My older sister is the latest in this line of alcoholics; she started drinking when she was in her mid-teens and is now in her late fifties. My sister held a post graduate degree and worked in a professional environment until the alcohol fully took over her life. By the time she was in her thirties she was unable to hold down a job and is now on a disability pension.

She has been in numerous car accidents, has been a victim and perpetrator of family violence, has suffered from lymphoma, and at times has been homeless. She refuses all treatment for her alcoholism, which has been a source of despair for her family, especially our late mother. It is with regret that we didn't understand the signs when she was younger and find some way of getting her treatment when there was still some hope.

What has made her condition infinitely worse for those around her has been her consumption of marijuana. When she has been particularly unwell and malnourished the combination of marijuana and alcohol has plunged her into psychotic episodes. Her whole persona changes – she becomes sly, paranoid, abusive and violent. She makes strange hand gestures in the air and talks to disembodied spirits. I hardly know how to tell you how awful it has been to be around her when she is under the influence of both substances at the same time. It is so unbearable that I have mostly had to disengage from her life or the stress would have destroyed me on an emotional level.

So many people I know think that marijuana is 'safe' and strongly defend its use. They say that it is better than alcohol, which it may be for some people if it is used irregularly and on its own. However, they haven't

seen and lived with the consequences of the combined consumption of marijuana and alcohol by a vulnerable family member.

There is hardly any accessible information about psychosis and marijuana use in the public domain, let alone psychosis brought about by a dual addiction. I would like to see much more funded research in this area, and more accessible information for addicts and their family members about the issue. I would also like to see effort put into outreach, counselling and treatment for young people who suffer from a dual addiction.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

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