

Deb Foskey MLA

Member for Molonglo

Medicinal use of Cannabis

This note is background to the exposure draft of Drugs of Dependence (Cannabis for Medical Conditions Trial) Amendment Bill 2005, and an invitation for feedback.

The proposed Bill would establish a trial of a scheme to permit people suffering from chronic pain and a range of illnesses to self medicate, legally, with cannabis. It would also permit them (or nominated care givers) to grow cannabis plants for that purpose. They would require some support from their GP and a permit from the Chief Health Officer.

Detailed regulations still need to be worked out in consultation with Government, experts and people in the community.

It is important to note that we are not looking to establish a system to supply the drug in any particular form nor to guarantee any particular quality. The principle of the Greens' approach at this stage is simply to lift the stigma from those people using cannabis for medicinal purposes, who are already having a hard time.

The NSW Government is on the record in favour of introducing a scheme with similar aims, although progress has been slow. There has been some discussion of a range of other methods of delivery such as the nasal spray system being developed in the US. We will watch that process very closely.


In the meantime, however, consistent with requests from many community groups around Australia – ranging from the Tasmanian branch of the CWA to the multi-party Australian Parliamentary Group for Drug Law Reform – the ACT Greens are looking to trial the legalised medical (but not the recreational) use of whole plant cannabis.

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Thank you



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