

SURVEY OF DOCTORS IN REGARD TO PRESCRIPTION OF CANNABIS / CANNABIS MEDICINES 2016-2017

**SURVEY UNDERTAKEN BY MEDICAL CANNABIS USERS
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (MCUA) INC.**

<http://www.mcuainc.org.au/>

**WITH BRIEF ANALYSIS / COMMENT BY
AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL CANNABIS SIGNPOST**

<http://amcsignpost.net/>

**BRIEF ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES BY DOCTORS TO INFORMAL SURVEY
CONDUCTED BY MEMBERS OF MCUA AUSTRALIA**
by AMCSignpost
<http://amcsignpost.net/>

The following data were gathered by the Medical Cannabis Users Association of Australia Inc. - an advocacy / pressure group / membership organisation of 14,000+ users of medicinal cannabis.

The survey was undertaken from late 2016 to the present by members using the Group's Facebook page following a request such individuals provide anecdotal reports of what occurred when speaking with their doctors about the possibility of prescribing the medicine in question.

The survey is not large - it comprises just under 150 usable responses, which have been anonymised due to the legal situation with the drug in Australia at the present time.

Nor is it scientific, respondents having presented themselves voluntarily to take part in the exercise.

Moreover, since the doctors concerned were not provided any kind of structured or standardised questions by MCUA participants, the data are wholly qualitative making detailed analysis more tricky. This is doubly true given various of the respondents are clearly being treated by a number of practitioners (i.e GP + one or more specialists) some of whose opinions differ upon the matter, even while 'sharing' a patient. The conclusions therefore are *open to interpretation* and for the sake of transparency, categorisation of the responses are provided in a Table in this document's Appendix.

With that said, given the fairly random (self) selection of the respondents, the sample may arguably prove to some extent representative of a wider population of medics and at best our conclusions may thus offer some insight into the proportion of doctors believing x or y in relation to the subject. At worst - pending a more rigorous and larger exercise (perhaps the AMA and / or Royal Colleges might at some point oblige?) - the raw data themselves afford at least a small snapshot of what, at the very least, upward of 150 health practitioners think in respect of the matter.

And it has, in any case, enabled an extremely rough, quick, rule-of-thumb sketch to be undertaken to describing the kinds of sentiments expressed by doctors toward cannabis use as a medicine, and (possibly) an inkling of the ratios of the views that are held. It should be stressed however these conclusions, hastily calculated, are *not a substitute for considering each of the responses in full*.

As the reader will note, in our view five main categories of doctors' opinion emerge from these, which are:

- (i) Those who are fully supportive of their patients' cannabis use;
- (ii) Those who turn a blind eye to it;
- (iii) Those who are opposed to its use, strongly or otherwise;
- (iv) Those who do not feel they have sufficient knowledge or understanding and / or are unable to comment but appear open to further information;
- (v) Those who perceive the regulatory and / or administrative and / or professional restrictions too daunting to consider prescribing the drug.

With the exception of (ii) ('Those that are strongly opposed') a significant number of doctors fell into two or more camps - e.g. they strongly supported cannabis use and would turn a blind eye or were strongly supportive and perceived current restrictions as too great. In such instances respondents were included in more than one category.

A further category - 'doctors supportive or aware of their patients' medical cannabis use' was also created by avoiding, in this separate calculation, the placing of the same respondent in both (i) and (ii) so that these categories could be combined. This was because a relatively high proportion of medics appeared to know of - and were seemingly perfectly happy with - their patients' use of the drug - an evaluation felt to be of significance. If such figures are remotely accurate in what they suggest, it is possible to speculate that:

- As many doctors are aware of, or actively support their patients use of cannabis for medical purposes as those who oppose it;
- A fifth actively do support their patients' use, while a further fifth turn a blind eye;
- Nearly 40% however seem opposed, either strongly or otherwise and for a variety of reasons;
- A fifth say the paperwork, bureaucracy, politics and regulation stand in the way of prescribing the medicine;
- A minority are currently not sufficiently well informed on the subject but are open to learning more.

As we have said, these conclusions are open to interpretation and the raw data are certainly worthy of further scrutiny. Read collectively however they do perhaps give a flavour of how those 'at the coalface' deliberate when faced with issue at hand.

Results by % are as follows:

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|---|-----|
| • Doctors fully supportive of their patients' cannabis use | 22% |
| • Those who turn a blind eye to it | 21% |
| • Opposed, strongly or otherwise | 38% |
| • Have insufficient information but not closed understanding more | 8% |
| • Paperwork/applications too difficult or other legal or political problems | 20% |
| • Are aware of and / or support their patients' use | 42% |

THE RESPONSES

1. Both my pain specialist and GP are saying that I'm better off going to my dealer for cannabis as the government is taking their sweet time while people are suffering. This is not right but it is the way the world is. The more we suffer, the better for the government.
2. Both our GP and specialist have been 110% behind us from the start back in 2014 when I started researching MC benefits. We have regular conversations about medicinal cannabis, and they both want to understand and learn more about this treatment. They have watched progress since the start on MC in January 2015, they have both referred patients to us that feel could benefit from MC, and they both have requested one of the hard-copy, bound editions of 'the leaf' newsletter for their respective consulting rooms. On odd occasions we have received a phone call from either of them, saying that they have a patient with x and asking if MC would help. We have been extremely lucky to have our medical professionals stand behind us and the cause. I look forward to the day when we can publicly name them and thank them without fear of repercussions.
3. All of my son's doctors are for it. We are talking about GPs - more than one, I should add. A neurologist and paediatrician as well. My neighbour is a cop and his wife was saying to me that they are all for it. They suffered the death of a family member due to epilepsy. He was 20 when he passed away. My son just turned 18 this year so we are now being discriminated by the State Government and I was told by a Minister in an email that they will prosecute me if I give it to my son. I don't care - let them.
4. After three lumbar spine operations I decided enough was enough. Got me medicated Canna Oil and about 2 years later I am almost 100%. My pain specialist said to 'go for it...get it and eat it or smoke it...just use it'.
5. Professor (epilepsy) said that cannabis would not help and willingly admitted nothing he had to offer has worked. Admitted he has patients that use it, without harm. Admitted his colleagues want to do trials. GP incredibly supportive - charted cannabis meds. Supported reducing and monitored weaning of AED's. Pain Specialists and Neuro Surgeon dead against cannabis. Full stop! Local anaesthesiologist recommended bringing cannabis to hospital to treat for post surgical pain. Did not use morphine post surgery because she believed that cannabis is a far better analgesic. Charted at the hospital. All nurses, ambulance officers we have come across since starting cannabis fully support cannabis therapy.
6. My pain specialist is all for it and has done his own research and even been to a few seminars, one of which was in Canada. His only concern is the availability of certain strains and access to either CBD or THC dominant oils. He would much rather me use cannabis oil instead of endone.
7. Both my GPs have said if it helps, do what you have to. Both are interested in being able to prescribe also when the law changes in this State. Will they change their mind after they see all the red tape they have to go through? I don't know. For now, they support my decision.
8. My GP supports my choice of using cannabis as my treatment for PTSD and anxiety disorder. On the prescription antidepressants and anti-psychotics, I am dysfunctional and lethargic. I struggle to concentrate and unable to work and pensioned off..... I said f**k that! I said to my doctor, I have nothing to lose (apart from a life as a zombie) and that from research I had read, I was going to replace my prescription meds with cannabis. His main concerns were dosing and controlling use, availability (what happens if I can't score?) and the legality and dealings with law enforcement exacerbating my anxiety. We discussed and continue to discuss these concerns and he

supports and advises me. I weaned myself off the prescription meds over a period of about 6 months replacing the meds with cannabis of an evening. Now 3 years later, I have held down employment in a high stress workplace and I have my life back. Yes, I have my setbacks and bad days but they are less frequent. I am lucky to have a GP that I can trust and be open and frank with and one that supports my choices with an open mind.

9. Both my GP & pain specialist are for it. My Dr has supported me since I started using tincture nearly two years ago.

10. After a couple of years of getting to know me and my health, my doctor agreed cannabis is the best rather than pharmaceuticals but I can't see him putting that in writing.

11. Similar story here. Been told to keep doing what we are doing.

12. My Dr told me to stop smoking due to my asthma, and go for cannabis cookies instead for pain relief. It was good advice.

13. I told my doctor I smoked (and specified it was not tobacco). I discussed it with her and explained why. She was understanding, not critical, and from what I could see was supportive of medicinal uses of marijuana.

14. Some doctors no longer join the AMA because they won't accept homoeopathic medicines or acupuncture or anything but pharma-dictated protocols. Of course we know why.

15. My husband was in hospital six months ago and the medical students seemed open to medical cannabis when their superiors weren't around.

16. My doc really doesn't want more patients And he is spending all of his free time in learning everything about marijuana in general and medical marijuana. After seeing the transformation in me.

17. My psychiatrist supports it but can't condone. Though the nods say it all when you talk about the difference it makes.

18. My doctor didn't have a clue and offered out of date information from the State Government and then said I knew more about the official processes than him and could I please supply some information if I wanted to come talk about prescribed medicinal cannabis - rather useless waste of time to go to the doctor on that occasion.

19. I asked my GP'If I had a handful of numerous pain meds in this hand (L) and cannabis in this hand (R) which would be the better alternative?'
'Definitely the Right.'

20. My doc is all good. Told him I smoke weed for my PTSD and we are both happy.

21. My lung specialist and GP encourage me to use the oil as it's keeping me out of hospital, pain free and more. If I stop, I go backward. My doctors are great with it.

22. Said I sometimes consume MC for severe pain if I'm not going out. Dr said yes I agree there's benefits to it. We haven't discussed it further, I'm taking prescribed opiate long term otherwise.

- 23.** My doctor is in favour of Medical Cannabis but I am not at all sure of her stance on psychotropic THC.
- 24.** I've been told by my pain management doctor, my GP & neuro-surgeon that the only relief I will get now that I have opioid hyperalgesia is by using marijuana. My GP even suggested that if I grew my own plant, that, having chronic pain, I wouldn't be charged.
- 25.** I'm lucky. I've had positive responses, either they've approved, or been intrigued... And my specialist team range in age and ethnicity...ten years ago though...totally different story and set of responses.
- 26.** My oncologist is on board with the oils.
- 27.** Told him I was using cannabis balm and I'd bring it in next time. Oh and he said many Drs know it works but it is illegal.
- 28.** Last week I spoke to both my GP and my psychiatrist about it, they are both supportive, but the GP did give me the legal talk before she told me how many of her patients take it. I see a new pain specialist soon and my psychiatrist told me if he isn't supportive of me trying/using it then he will help me find one who is. He said he can't prescribe it for depression but possibly for my CD which will fall under the pain specialist. All in all it was more of a positive response than I was expecting to be honest, based on others comments I have seen.
- 29.** I finally got the courage to talk to my Dr about it yesterday. He shut me down and made me feel so bad. He wouldn't listen to anything I had to say on the topic. I have been using cannabis for three months. My health has improved greatly. I'm off all pain meds (which only took the edge off the pain) I was on OxyContin and endone daily. I take neither of these any more. He told me cannabis would make me forgetful. I asked him 'how forgetful do you think I am when I'm on OxyContin and endone?' He knows how vague it makes me. I asked him 'what choice do I have'? He said I needed to take pharmaceutical drugs (the ones that don't work for my pain) . I left his office almost in tears. It took a lot of courage to talk to my Dr about this
- 30.** I have my appointment with my pain management specialist this month, as he told me that I have a great chance of being eligible and he can prescribe from now. I will update you on how it goes.
- 31.** Every time I suggest or bring it up I get the old eye roll.... even after changing doctors several times....it's like they feel like they are being replaced or something....or the years spent learning medicine was a farce.
- 32.** Our Dr laughed and I tried to give him info...flatly refused. I asked him if he'd heard of the endocannabinoid system and tried to educate him a tad....he studied 5 yrs to be a Dr.of pharma crap.
- 33.** Our doctors knows only what they have heard in the media. So not prescribing.
- 34.** My doctor changed subject even after I said, with all due respect, I know what works for my body. And sadly I go without a lot, so I also know what my body's like without.'His reply ? 'It matters as I should know. As it is making all other meds work differently.'
- 35.** My doctor, who has known for many years that I smoke & vapourise cannabis, has said that my type of Epilepsy is not covered by any scheme! Because I have not had a seizure for over 12

years (due to my decision to start using cannabis on a daily basis rather than a weekly, sometimes monthly basis) my epilepsy is considered to be fully controlled by medications I am still on (Tegretol 200mg x 1, Tegretol 400mg x 2 & Topamax 50mg x 1 per day). Even though my seizures only completely ceased once I began using cannabis on a daily basis!!!! He also stated that he doesn't know much about cannabis or the endocannabinoid system, or how it all works!! I told him he should do his own studies into whole plant cannabis & it's many benefits & he did agree to that!! Whether he will or not, I do not know?!?! But I will keep harping on in his ear & pushing the many benefits until he at least does his own bit of research!! He has been my Doctor for nearly 40 years!!

36. I think my GP would be happy to prescribe it to me.. he wants me off the many opioids I use for pain and I don't blame him. Definitely be happier using something natural!

37. My Dr is all for it. She is going to look into it further and told to book back in a few weeks to have another chat.

38. My GP says he is supportive of patients/cannabis. However he will not go into doing all the forms nor speak to MCUA regarding a doctors perspective. Maybe when people find a doctor willing to go the whole trip can you let us all know so we go to them too?

39. Hi just wanting people to let you know, I got all the forms. The Category B form Special Access Scheme, for doctor to fill forms in. 1. they are not informing doctors of these new laws where, what, how etc. 2 . They are asking doctors for the Active Ingredient, dose, form & strength e.g. 500mg tablet, dose & frequently, trade name /device name, etc etc . 3. Prescriber details. Etc . 4. ASKING DOCTORS TO FIND A SUPPLIER. My Doctor was shocked and I too, she knows nothing of the above, asking DOCTORS TO FIND SUPPLIER FOR MEDICAL MARIJUANA, NO DOCTOR IS GOING TO FILL THESE FORMS IN BECAUSE OF THESE REASONS. My doctor said she was no drug dealer and was appalled.

40. Spoke to my oncologist today about using cannabis oil, his reply 'Go for it' said it will do no harm. Happy days.

41. I spoke to my doctor and was told that its not legal yet and she has no idea about it.

42. I spoke to a specialist rheumatologist at the hospital in March on the advice from someone connected with the Hemp Party with respect to an application to the TGA but he declined, denied any knowledge of it's existence and advised I talk to someone specialised in pain management. He implied that if my treatment wasn't successful I might try again. I've spoken to a few GPs as well; they are all ostriches crossed with sheep.

43. Can't find a doctor who has the time for all the paper work, my GP and phsych are following my health closely, both know I'm using oil instead of poison first time in twenty years of pain med. I am waiting for a doctor to get back to me, he wants to try.

44. Dr isn't against it, but, she won't help me get it - she just came up with all sorts of reasons as to why she cant help me, but isn't against the use of cannabis oil. The fear factor I think. I have to source my oil from outside Aus, it is the only way I can get it to treat my COPD.

45. Mine said he would look into it.

46. Talk to the hand.

47. I have spoken with four so far. All have told me it's illegal, harmful, and would be of no use at all.
48. Just spoke to my oncologists several minutes ago coincidentally!!! They suggest there hasn't been enough research shown in their medical manuals to start to advise patients .
49. Asked my GP, they told me 'it was a poison'. Asked if they could elaborate, but they could not (not surprised). Now looking for a new GP.
50. I've also asked my Dr. Won't have a bar of it as it's not legal yet.
51. I asked my doctor who is quite alternative, about it for my son's asthma. He said cannabis is all very new & not a lot of research has been done. My response was wtf?
52. I asked my doctor about a cannabis tincture and he flat ignored it and just printed up a prescription for some s**t that I screwed up with a bit of rage.
53. I've not spoken to my GP about a script. But thus far she has been anti-cannabis and anti-medical cannabis. My mother's GP is also anti. I spoke to mum's GP and mine about it for my mum's dementia and both 'backed up furiously'! So disappointing. I had an awesome GP who I'm positive would be pro.
54. Spoke to my oncologist (one of the best in Aus) yesterday, he said it's illegal but you can get it, it will do no harm and help with side effects, he said I won't say it cures cancer but it's worth a go.
55. My GP happy to write script when legal for rheumatoid/fibro but will not do the required paper work now. My rheumatologist will not allow me to even mention herbal cannabis. Rheumatology Dept. have not even given it a second glance apparently.
56. I openly speak to my doctor about it, he's cool with it, but I'm sensing because of the information that is still unavailable about MC to the health care providers - or should I say misinformation they do have - the guy seems either nervous or reluctant to talk about it. They simply don't know, as far as my neurologist goes. Well, they are overpaid drug pushers eager to get you on whatever they can as quickly as they can and are not even interested in anything natural. I asked one neurologist instead of jumping all over his prescription pad every time I walk through the door if he had any advice with natural foods that help with MS, and his advice.... 'don't eat salt.' I said I don't eat processed salt only pink rock salt which is full of minerals our body needs. He said no, all salt is bad for you.
57. I have had many conversations with my treating doctors about #FullSpectrumCannabismedicine. Although supportive and keen to get me completely off opiates as they are concerned about overdose, the paperwork involved and the sheer amount of bs involved has created major walls moving forward. They simply do not have the time.
58. Our new GP is integrative and was all for mom using the oil for her cancer but he didn't seem too keen on wanting to prescribe it and avoided the question. But he knows about the research and has other patients he treats using it. Just black market though.
59. I was scoffed at at one point. Eventually got somewhere but there is no supply line yet.
60. Spoke with a Dr today and I was speaking to her about getting it from Canada. She said that

the paper work and hoops are so huge, and even then you're not guaranteed an approval. She reckons for my elderly mother they wouldn't even pass her. But she's 100% for it. Told me to go home and make cookies for mum.

61. My Doctor asked me what I was taking for my fibromyalgia. When I said cannabis oil, he had no reaction whatsoever.

62. My doctor does listen but somebody is controlling them to say nothing to you about it. It's one big scam. The sad thing is they all know it works. I know an ambo officer who has stated to me he knows it works because of people he picks up - some should not be here any more but are getting better. Doctors are saying if it works use it.

63. My Pain Management specialist was as upset as all of us he made appointments for in November. He said that they hadn't even decided who would supply, etc. yet and that it was just to shut us all up for a while.

64. My doctor said 'it's too much of a mine field' for him to get involved.

65. Was told it will be a very, very long time before it will be available for chronic pain and nerve issues, as in years.

66. Mine said 'it's all talk.'

67. I've got ruptured vertebrae in three locations in lower back causing bilateral nerve irritation. My doc has never said a bad thing about me using it for pain management. It helps me stay off high dose anti-inflammatory medication which causes me severe IBS and other bad side effects.

68. My neurologist is frustrated that he can't help me easily access medical cannabis. Sativex (a cannabis spray made in UK) can be prescribed BUT doctor has to jump through hoops and patient has to front up at pharmacy every day to get their meds. EVERY day. Makes sense, after all - most people with MS are soooo able-bodied!!! He just shakes his head in despair.

69. Our doctor only knew about the laws changing from the TV and news on radio.

70. Can't get prescription yet, but my doctor says no problem taking it with my chemotherapy.

71. My mum's GP offered to prescribe it for her chronic back pain as everything else has failed but when he went to apply to become a prescriber he gave up because it was just too hard. In his words 'bloody impossible' and the government has lied. I honestly don't think any doctor will do this because there is too much red tape and hoops to jump through and it has to be done for each individual patient. It's a joke really forcing people to access it illegally.

72. My partner spoke to his specialist about it for Psoriatic Arthritis. He played dumb and told him he didn't know anything about it, or its benefits!

73. My anaesthesiologist was shocked to hear I was on no pharma meds whatsoever (shaking his head in disbelief as he skimmed over my file) but when I mentioned about the oil I have been taking for past 2 years, he just went 'ahah so that's what is controlling the pain' and he strongly suggested I discuss this with my doctor but I'm yet to find a resident doctor who is around longer than 3 months.

74. My son and I spoke to our Dr about it months ago and she thought it would be good for us

both . I will talk to her about it but in saying that, if she fills out papers and I get the prescription I can't afford it yet as I heard it was very expensive. And how would she know what type to prescribe as I have multiple illnesses and my son has chronic pain, post surgical arthritis and severe anxiety.

75. Bloody difficult. My doc was prepared to support people with this. And then the owners of the medical centre, kicked him out, gave him the arse. He is now looking for another job. Bloody good doc too. Now, where do I find a new doctor, that actually cares about the patients? As most do not!

76. I spoke to my Doctor and then I explained the process. He just rolled his eyes and said too many hurdles. I also taught him about the Endocannabinoid system. He googled it right in front of me.

77. I spoke to my doctor some weeks ago and he said the amount of regulation and application paperwork was horrendous. He is sympathetic to the cause as he has been aware of my use for a number of years and very interested in the benefits gained.

78. My Doc said basically the same thing. Overkill with paperwork.

79. He didn't know anything about it and when he looked it up and he read it to me it's all a lot of BS (my words) and not for nerve pain. Nothing is legal yet. And no-one is legal in Australia to make or sell full plant extract oil yet . Two times I have been now .So people who have tried to do it by the law are having to go against the law for their own health and quality of life. And they say we are a free country.

80. I just saw my doctor about my chronic pain, stress, anxiety and insomnia. He told me weed makes my anxiety worse and I should quit taking cannabis and try prescribed meds again. So although the best doctor in town, and he did say he did not want to put me on opioids, but hey what on earth am I meant to do, walk round in pain and stressed and fear of attacks or be judged like a criminal for trying to do right by my body and mind? Because the medication I was on I ended up not working and it turned me into Homer Simpson (yellow eyes, skin and half a brain). No joke, that's what people were calling me then. And I still believe, despite what was said, it is working well and a hundred times better than the prescribed meds I was on

81. Asked my doctor. He laughed and said it wasn't a medicine he was allowed to proscribe. He had no knowledge on it. It's not an interest with the array of other chemicals he can prescribe.

82. My understanding is general GPs have not been given any paperwork by Medicare on how the scheme will work & don't know themselves how to access it. Also has anybody noticed the price of raw materials is amping up? All the legislation has been for is a photo op for all politicians involved to have their photo taken with some poor cancer patient or cancer kiddy. Nothing has changed folks. Rely only on yourself, same as it has been for decades.

83. The consultant psychiatrist at the mental health and addiction service at the hospital reports they would not prescribe it now or any time in the foreseeable future. He suggested there were a number of reasons 1) they deal with addiction 2) they are psychiatrists 3) The State Health Department won't allow it.

84. My Oncologist said when I asked about it 'that's the stuff that sends you crazy' so not much hope there.

85. Both my GP and my specialist just laughed when I asked about prescribing cannabis...My

specialist then added that they used it as a medicine 3000 years ago and it worked then.

86. My doc said he doesn't have a problem prescribing it when it is legally available in this State.
87. A good friend asked for help from there GP - they have a child disabled and has fits . The Dr told them to look elsewhere because he's not interested in helping them with it.
88. I asked my daughters paediatrician about using it for my daughters dystonia, and she said she cannot recommend it as a doctor, but if she was my daughters mum, she would be trying it.
89. My Dr says she doesn't know anything about it and refuses to find out.
90. My Dr has an open mind, but still unsure re. mental health. I have shown him the difference and he called my hubby and me in to discuss it. He is very open now... he says keep doing what you're doing. I was diagnosed with depression after my second child and started on the misery-go-round that the meds big pharma supply started. After ten years in hell, I weaned and use oil and a spray, both with THC. I've read that oil without THC is doing great for people with bi-polar etc. I can only steer him to the knowledge I find.
91. A doctor and his comrades left me for dead with Lyme Disease, had to find another Dr. He told me with a wink to use cannabis as it wouldn't kill me like the pills he just handed me to get some sleep after two years of no sleep . (I dont count 1-2 hrs a night as sleep). Physician, heal thyself.
92. I asked my GP about it for anxiety and depression. His answer was that they will not make it available for those like you. I find that a small buy can shift me from looming depression and bring me back into balance. My problem atm is that I need to find a reputable supply in my locality
93. I asked a GP I saw today - after I had got my 'normal poisons' along with the free lecture about pain meds being bad for you - what he thought of the using of Cannabis oil for chronic pain? He said he didn't like it because doctors wouldn't be able to tell the difference between the drug addicts and the genuine people that were in pain! I told him he couldn't tell that now and cannabis was not addictive!
94. My doctors won't even try to apply it's so frustrating, they know and are waiting to hear more, not good enough.
95. Too much red tape and form filling, don't have time,easier to write a script, hard to change old habits. Getting nowhere.
96. Pretty much dismissed the notion. Wanted to write me a script for some other crap.
97. Originally he had NO idea how to apply or whom to contact to apply for special access etc. His reaction was almost laughter, he said no point applying to TGA due to ridiculously strict guidelines & there's no plant matter in the country - it'd need to be imported & on a disability pension it's so far out of my reach it's cruel & impractical. He supports medicinal cannabis providing he's writing a prescription for it, only.
98. Went to my Doctor and asked him about it. He told me it would be at least another 10years away from being legalised in the West.....the very next day the Premier legalised it.....don't know why he bothered though, no one knows how to even write a script for it.

- 99.** Our Dr signed the TGA SAS script - was then threatened to be de-registered because of it, but to this day we still hold a TGA SAS approval.
- 100.** Had a chat with my GP that dealt with my epilepsy. He has seen a lot of the "miracle" work weed has done, I stopped him and said "its not weed it's Cannabis" he agreed with me and was supportive of my opinion, but added he needs to do more research before trusting it... was a little disappointed but not a straight up no.... disappointing but he said it's on his mind so I see him open to it once legal and he can research it.
- 101.** My doctor gave me a letter saying I self medicate because of pain but told me that he cannot prescribe because of red tape. Doctors have to have experience in cannabis, which none do.
- 102.** My doctor said similar things to others. Mainly that she didn't know enough about it to give me a script.
- 103.** A different doctor I saw didn't even acknowledge what I'd asked. Instead she wrote a referral for counselling (for other matters) and in the paperwork she wrote 'pot' in response to the substance abuse questionnaire. It gets better. Then tried to. prescribe Olanzapine knowing I'm off all pharma. I have grade 3 spondylolisthesis and fibro. But was she was ever so confident I should cease cannabis and take the pill instead.
- 104.** My doctor and oncologist are all for medicinal cannabis, but are the same as everyone else are waiting for it to be legal for fear of being de-registered. I love both my onc and my Dr so no way do I want that happening to them. They have seen how far I have come with my health on medicinal cannabis.. Especially when nearly 3 year's ago I got given 18 months to live. I owe an amazing woman and her partner for supplying me with the cannabis oil in the first place without them my children wouldn't have a mum.
- 105.** Tried 3 GPs in my area. All said it would be pointless trying as I am not dying and they doubted the efficacy of cannabis in treating nerve pain.
- 106.** My GP isn't interested but has no problem with Cannabis. My Gastroenterologist says there needs to be more scientific proof!! This State home of the 'stuck-in-their-ways'!! We're gonna be very last, like normal.
- 107.** GP, specialist for throat, oncologist and physio said that they would take a personal note but have had no knowledge of prescribing cannabis. All said they would be looking into it. Not one had heard of formality for paperwork to prescribe.
- 108.** My doctor has started the paperwork. He is supportive as he has seen my allergic reactions to tablets he prescribed over 18+ months. My neurologist knows too, but doesn't "openly" support it. Does on the quiet side though. I had to show my doctor where to look for the application. Health Dept. hadn't told doctors it was available.
- 109.** I had a doctor a few years ago who wanted to know who my supplier was....lol...said he swears by Cannabis and would love to get all his patients on it.....unfortunately for me he moved. Maybe I'll give him a call and try and get him involved somehow.....could do with a holiday and I'd gladly keep going to to him for scripts.
- 110.** No script....but he did tell me to take more oil....unofficially of course.

- 111.** My doctor said, 'we don't know what's causing the issue but if you're finding Cannabis helpful then continue using it. Some people with similar conditions have found that Cannabis can increase anxiety, so if you feel that, then you should stop and re-asses.'
- 112.** My doc said he is applying for the license and the government are making it really hard.
- 113.** Have been using cannabis for 20 years for pain and sleep deprivation from spina bifida and chiari malformation, arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, depression, anxiety & PTSD and fibro. Every doctor I've been to I have told how cannabis helps me to be pain free and sleep all night . All to no avail and have more and more pills shoved on my face. I have just been put on lyrica and from what I have read I am now scared for my life.
- 114.** Was having seizures a while ago, saw my oncologist he said either my GBM4 was regrowing or damage from the operation. Urgent MRI, all clear. He then said he wanted to see me in a week's time and to take notes on when I had seizures. Went and saw him a week later where we discussed putting me on anti-seizure medication, I told him I hadn't had any seizures in the last week, he was baffled and asked why, I then told him of my MCO, he said keep going it's obviously working an he wasn't keen on anti-seizure meds because of the side effects.
- 115.** Still waiting for answer. Doctor will do it but has to find out all info first. The police told me to get one, when I was busted with pot - 3grams.
- 116.** My doctor isn't willing to prescribe at all.
- 117.** I'm in the process, will keep you posted. I found if you spoon feed your GP, as in supply the direct phone numbers of the people to talk to at the Health Department things happen. Just make it as easy as possible for the GP.
- 118.** Yup done that to my GP and seeing me getting resurrected converted him. He is now studying anything he can find.
- 119.** Our current GP would be quite happy to write out a script if it was available. He was also the first Dr to say that smoking marijuana did not cause my brother's medical condition. He is an older Dr and is right up there with the latest information on things AND one of them is medicinal marijuana! I will just add though that the young lovely Dr we had seen for the past 4 yrs moved overseas (I know she would have prescribed it for many if she could) so we were on the hunt for a GP who had experience in complex & chronic conditions. We went to a Dr recommended to us by a respiratory nurse. Dr was about the same age as brother & me.....as soon as he said he COULD (like he had a say it in) turn a blind eye to my brother taking up smoking pot again -- I knew this was not the Dr for us! However all good things come to those who wait & WE got the perfect fit for us! His got script in hand ready & waiting...great Doctor.
- 120.** Mine says no, says 'marijuanas' don't help my epilepsy.
- 121.** I did actually ask the public paediatrician about using it for autism...he didn't say yes or no but did say whatever works for you...I'm guessing he is open to it for kids.
- 122.** Mine said if he found any of his patients under the affects of he would report to Child Services.
- 123.** My GP wants to give it a go.

- 124.** My doctor says no prescription for cannabis because the State Government won't recognise PTSD AND CHRONIC BACK PAIN UNLESS IM TERMINAL. Outrageous.
- 125.** When I asked for a script Dr said I should be able to get it over the counter to which I replied 'but its illegal without a script'. So doc proceeded to type in cannabis oil and no prescription medication arose . But I was told to leave it with him and he will look into it . Sounds promising especially from a Dr who agreed that painkillers are killing livers.
- 126.** My son's Neurologist has repeatedly said "it's illegal" & "there's no proof it works for adults with uncontrolled epilepsy". She doesn't even want to enter into a discussion about it.
- 127.** All doctors I've asked say its still illegal. Even last week.
- 128.** My Dr is all for it and has started the paperwork.
- 129.** My doc knows I smoke pot, for my fibro, but other than that, no response. My heart specialist same. The brain specialist said 'but it's illegal.
- 130.** I'm so disappointed by it all. For thirty years I've been taking pills that killed my liver and made me a zombie, I missed out on so much. My life changed when using oil, first time in my adult life I'm not taking pain killers and Valium and I'm coping better than ever. But the thought of going back to prescription meds makes me so scared . My doctors are aware that the oil I made has been life changing, but a letter of support is beyond them . It worries me so much to have to go back to the way I was living. I wasn't coping, but the law is an arse. Is there anyone who can point me in the direction of forms for my doctors to fill out? I'm beyond lost at this point I'd love to keep pushing towards change to stop breaking the law, not to worry about being busted trying to help others.
- 131.** Too much red tape.
- 132.** I wrote in a while back about what a Dr said to me.. but basically she said that it's nearly impossible to get and even then it may not be approved. To many hoops to jump through for a most likely answer of NO.
- 133.** I asked my Neurologist about prescribing cannabis oil for my epilepsy he said "what a load of rubbish" he wouldn't even entertain the idea. Hence I'm looking for another neurologist.
- 134.** I got told it makes you schizophrenic & would not have anything to do with it.
- 135.** My spinal cord Dr said he will support me for my chronic pain. This is a first for him because I just said I don't want to get stomach cancer from opiates I also said at least it is a natural product with no THC.
- 136.** I have a spinal issue and the Dr just kept writing script after script for pharma til I was on 100mg a day of OxyCodone which btw was shit and didn't alleviate any pain. So over having the same BS from them. I came off them easily thankfully in September and switched to cannabis but oh dear I may be putting my children at risk now that I'm healthier and more active. F**ing politics! This is the only medicine which works for my problem and I won't back down. Black market it is. No tax for them scoundrels.
- 137.** My son is 32. He was diagnosed with MS at 26. He smokes pot for the pain and his Dr & neurologist are completely fine about this.. we have spoken to both on numerous occasions of getting onto medical. They are not helpful but they also do not disagree with the use.

138. When I mentioned cannabis to my doctor she yelled over the top of me and said 'oh we don't talk about that here, stop please.' Second time I asked she said a lot of people are asking but nothing she can do till the laws change but even then it probably won't change so here have these pills.

139. I have been diagnosed with PTSD and chronic upper thoracic back pain but when I admit to a doctor that I vaporise cannabis I'm met with a wall.

140. I asked my Dr about it and he got up off his chair and stormed around the room as if I had said I was carrying a deadly weapon.

141. I'm so lucky my doctor highly recommends the medical cannabis oil. He even filled in my paperwork for my license but I opted not to get it as I thought the cops might target me... yet my pain doctor wanted me to stop taking it but he is a rude arrogant pig... my twin has lupus but it's been in remission for 20 months since she started the oil.

142. As someone who has bipolar after trying at least 15 different meds, marijuana is the only one that works. Drs are afraid of looking like a drug dealer and it could do them out if the kickback scheme they have with the pharmaceutical companies. Watch how many change their views when pharmaceutical pot becomes available.

143. Surprisingly my psychologist is happy with me using it if it helps me. Which it does to a degree obviously. Whereas my GP who I thought would be open to it cracked the sh*ts with me big time. But it was ok for her to prescribe me beta-blockers and Imagrin to treat my migraine pain.

144. I stopped seeing my psychiatrist because even though I'd been rushed to hospital due to serotonin syndrome resulting in adult respiratory distress disorder due to him putting me on Lithium on top of Efexor he still insisted I continue taking these medications together! Serotonin syndrome is a DEADLY side effect mind you. Take no notice of these poisoning fools. Go green - at least you will not die.

145. Cannabis helps my mental health!! I was on anti-psychotics and other meds for many years, but I function BETTER with cannabis. I did choose this myself with no mention to my psychiatrist and only vague mentions to my psychologist.

146. I have asked my doctor about the medical cannabis. He looked at me as if I had two heads...I have had chronic back pain for over ten years...I'm on morphine patches but I'm not getting much benefit from them at all...I'm in Australia any help would be much appreciated.

147. Isn't great. I've been lucky my specialist and my two GPs wholly support me and my GP would love to write a script for it but as he says, cant find any chemist to do it.

148. My doctor looked like I'd pulled a gun on him when I showed him the Medical Cannabis Queensland health information. He said that the legislation is crap and it's a waste of time to bother with the process.

APPENDIX ONE

The below table illustrates how responses were categorised and thus how the %age figures were arrived at which are necessarily open to discussion and or / interpretation. They are presented here in order for the reader to agree or differ with

Table 1: Responses by category

Category	Response Number
(i) Doctors fully supportive of their patients' cannabis use	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 37, 38, 73, 74, 75, 109, 118, 119, 123, 128, 135, 141
(ii) Those who turn a blind eye to it	15, 17, 19, 22, 23, 27, 28, 40, 44, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 67, 70, 88, 90, 91, 104, 106, 108, 110, 111, 114, 119, 121, 129, 130, 137, 146, 145
(iii) Opposed, strongly or otherwise	5, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 41, 42, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 61, 65, 66, 69, 72, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89, 93, 94, 95, 96, 103, 105, 106, 113, 116, 120, 122, 126, 127, 133, 134, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 146, 148
(iv) Don't have enough information and actively seeking more	18, 25, 35, 37, 76, 82, 100, 102, 107, 115, 117, 125
(v) Paperwork/applications too difficult or other legal or political problems	1, 14, 38, 39, 43, 55, 57, 59, 60, 63, 64, 68, 71, 75, 76, 77, 78, 86, 92, 97, 98, 99, 101, 108, 112, 119, 124, 131, 132, 147
(vi) Combined categorisations of (i) and (ii) to indicate doctors supportive OR aware of their patients' medical cannabis use	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 37, 38, 40, 44, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 67, 70, 73, 74, 75, 88, 90, 91, 104, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 114, 118, 119, 121, 123, 128, 129, 130, 135, 137, 141, 143, 145