Medicinal Cannabis Use in Australia – Online Survey

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study about medicinal cannabis use in Australia.

You are invited to participate in this study if you or somebody you are a carer for has used cannabis for medicinal purposes in the last 12 months. This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don’t understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

✔ Understand what you have read.
✔ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.

You will be able to print this Participant Information Statement to keep, if you choose.

(2) Who is running the study?

This study is being conducted by Dr Nicholas Lintzeris and Dr David Allsop as part of the University of Sydney’s Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutic’s research.
This study is being funded by a grant from the Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics, University of Sydney

(3) What will the study involve for me?

If you consent to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey regarding your use of medicinal cannabis.

The survey will cover a range of questions regarding the use of medicinal cannabis in Australia, including:

1) Who is currently utilising cannabis for the treatment of chronic illness?
2) What physical and mental health complaints are associated with usage of Cannabis for therapeutic purposes within the Australian community?
3) How is Cannabis being acquired, administered and dosed for therapeutic purposes in the Australian community?
4) What are the Perceived harms and benefits of using Cannabis for therapeutic purposes by Australian patients?
5) What are the societal ramifications of using Cannabis for therapeutic purposes in Australia?

If you consent to participate in this study, you and the information that you provide will remain completely anonymous (you are not asked to provide any identifying information at any point during this survey). You automatically give consent to have the information that you provide included in this study when you submit your survey responses.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?

The survey should take between 20 and 40 minutes to complete. However, if you choose to take a break you can save and return to your survey at a later time if you record the code provided. Please take note of this code, as it is the only way for you to return and finish this study. We request that you only submit one survey (i.e. we only want information once from an individual, please do not complete more than one survey for this study).

(5) Who can take part in the study?

Any Australian having used cannabis or cannabis-based products for medical purposes within the last 12 months who is over the age of 18 is eligible to participate. If such an
individual is unable to complete the study unassisted, a guardian, or carer may complete the survey on their behalf.

Cannabis or cannabis-based products are defined as including any of the following:
- cannabis plant material
- oils prepared from cannabis plant material
- tinctures prepared from cannabis plant material
- commercial products containing cannabis or cannabinoids e.g. Elixinol
- pharmaceutical products prepared from cannabis e.g. Sativex
- cannabis resin
- any other preparations derived from cannabis or hemp

If you are under the age of 18, non-English speaking or suffering from any physical or mental condition that inhibits your capacity to complete the questionnaires this study is not appropriate for you at this time.

(6) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney.

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind later, you are free to withdraw at any time. You can do this by simply stopping answering survey questions and exiting the browser window.

Submitting your completed questionnaire is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. Once submitted, your responses cannot be withdrawn because they are anonymous and therefore we will not be able to tell whom they belong to.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs as a result of taking part in this study. However, if any of the questions cause you unease or make you feel uncomfortable, you are encouraged to discontinue participation in the survey.

If you experience any distress or discomfort from participating in this study, please contact one of the following:

Cannabis Information and Helpline
1800 30 40 50
11am–7pm, Monday to Friday (including public holidays)
Lifeline
13 11 14
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Confidential telephone counselling

Or contact Professor Nicholas Lintzeris to help arrange for appropriate counselling.
Nicholas Lintzeris Director, Drug and Alcohol services, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District Service, and Faculty of Medicine, Central Clinical School, University of Sydney.
Nicholas.Lintzeris@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au
Ph: (02) 93328777

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

We cannot guarantee that you will receive any direct benefits from being in the study. The information collected in this study may serve to provide a basis for future research into the benefits of medicinal cannabis that may eventually contribute to changes in its regulatory status. However, we cannot and do not guarantee or promise that any such thing will occur.

(9) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about you for the purposes of this research study. Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement.

All aspects of the study, including the results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information provided by participants. Researchers will not be able to identify you, nor match your survey to you individually.

As part of the study, you will complete a survey which will be hosted by the website Redcap, a securely encrypted website which makes no claim of ownership of the data you provide. No identifying information will be directly linked to any data you provide; your data will be identified by code only.

Data will be stored on a secure password-protected server. Only those involved in this study will have access to the data collected.
We will keep the information we collect for this study, and we may use it in future projects. By providing your consent you are allowing us to use information from the person under your guardianship/care in future projects. We don’t know at this stage what these other projects will involve. We will seek ethical approval before using the information in these future projects.

Study findings may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

(10) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

(11) What if I would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information Dr David Allsop will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact one of:

Dr David Allsop
✉: Psychopharmacology Laboratory, School of Psychology, The University of Sydney, Room 242 Top South Badham, Sydney, NSW, 2006, Australia
☎: +61 2 9351 3372
✉: +61 2 9036 5223  david.allsop@sydney.edu.au

Jessica Driels
Position: Associate researcher
✉: Brennan MacCallum (A18), University of Sydney, NSW 2006
☎: 0419850170
✉: jdri5971@uni.sydney.edu.au

(12) Will I be told the results of the study?

As the study is an anonymous survey (we are not collecting any identifying information from you), we are not able to provide individual feedback. However, the intention is to produce a published manuscript or a series of publications from this work. Upon publication, these manuscripts will be posted to the “News” section on the website of the Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics, University of Sydney (http://sydney.edu.au/news/lambert/3421.html)

It is also our intention to provide regular updates about preliminary findings throughout this study, along with other relevant information within the field, via a Facebook page that can be found at https://www.facebook.com/groups/463652783796403/.

(13) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?
Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney (Protocol Number 2015/234). As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

*Please print and keep a copy of this information sheet.*

Please Note: The Participant Information Statement and consent process will be carried out online in this study. This online form can be viewed at the following link:

https://surveys.sydney.edu.au/surveys/?s=6kmu5dwwAb