



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Sport

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ensuring safe and responsible supply of medicinal cannabis

The Turnbull Government is taking further action to enable the safe and legal distribution of medicinal cannabis products for adults and children suffering from painful and chronic conditions.

We recognise that access to medicinal cannabis is of vital importance to many Australians. But we must ensure this is done in a way that is safe and responsible.

To help achieve this, we have established and appointed members to the Australian Advisory Council on the Medicinal Use of Cannabis – which will provide expert advice to government.

I am pleased to announce that Professor James Angus AO has agreed to Chair the Advisory Council and Emeritus Professor Anne Tonkin has agreed to be Deputy Chair. They will be joined by some of Australia's top medical professionals.

Professor James Angus was appointed by the Victorian Labor Government as Chair of the Victorian Independent Medical Advisory Committee on Medicinal Cannabis, and is a leading academic and medical educator.

Professor Angus will assist in ensuring timely and safe access for patients including improving co-ordination between the federal and individual state regulators.

Professor Anne Tonkin is the Chair of the South Australian Medication Advisory Committee and a member of the Medical Board of Australia.

The Council's expert members bring a broad cross section of experience that will provide specialist, balanced and timely advice to the Government on:

- the ongoing implementation of the regulatory scheme allowing for the licenced cultivation and manufacture of medicinal cannabis here in Australia;
- the design of medical prescribing guidelines and the use of the Authorised Prescriber and Special Access Scheme mechanisms allowing for patient access; and
- the current state of medical evidence supporting the use of medicinal cannabis for a variety of clinical conditions.

Many Australians may not realise that patients can already access medicinal cannabis and its products from overseas via an Authorised Prescriber (doctor) or through the Special Access Scheme B process.

The Government's medicinal cannabis scheme allows for the safe cultivation and manufacture of medicinal cannabis products that will be safe to use and have standardised dosing.

It will bring the use of medicinal cannabis products under standard medical care where dose responses and adverse events can be properly monitored and responded to – just as happens with other medications.

Work is already underway to have further domestic supplies available and I want to commend the Victorian Government for their efforts to date in working to develop a domestic supply.

I look forward to working with the Council so Australians can have confidence in the medicinal use of cannabis and help relieve the pain and suffering of our fellow Australians.

(ENDS)

Advisory Council Members

Name	Organisation	Role
Professor James Angus	Chair of Victorian Independent Medical Advisory Committee on Medicinal Cannabis	Chair
Emiritus Professor Anne Tonkin	Chair of South Australian Medication Advisory Committee	Deputy Chair
Ms Liz Callaghan	Palliative Care Australia	Patient group
Professor Richard Chye	St Vincent's Hospital	Palliative care and pain
Dr Ian Freckelton QC	University of Melbourne	Law / former member of the 2015 Victorian Law Reform Commission Review
Professor Wayne Hall	University of Queensland	Toxicology (drugs) / Also advising the Queensland Government
Dr Chris Hayes	Faculty of Pain Medicine – Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists	Pain specialist
Ms Carol Ireland	Epilepsy Action Australia	Patient group
Professor Jennifer Martin	University of Newcastle	Pharmacology
Ms Michelle Lynch	Pharmaceutical Society of Australia	Pharmacy profession representative
Ms Ria Pryce	Centre for Medicinal Cannabis Research and Innovation	NSW Government nominee
Dr Morton Rawlin	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners	Medical profession representative
Dr Simon Walsh	Australian Federal Police	Chief Scientist
Dr Phil Wright	NSW Department of Primary Industry	Chief Scientist / cultivation
Professor Helen Zorbas	Cancer Australia	Patient group