



Minister for Health and  
Minister for Ambulance Services  
Member for Woodridge

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Mr Neil Laurie  
Clerk of the Parliament  
Queensland Parliamentary Service  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 2645-16, tabled in Parliament on 1 November 2016, in relation to amnesty to administer whole plant medicinal cannabis.

On 12 October 2016, the Public Health (Medicinal Cannabis) Bill 2016 was passed by the Queensland Parliament without any opposition. The legislation creates a new regulatory framework under which medicinal cannabis products may be prescribed and dispensed to patients in Queensland, while preventing unauthorised use. The regulatory framework under the legislation will commence on 1 March 2017.

The unregulated use of medicinal cannabis fails to provide access to a safe and reliable supply of medicinal cannabis product and does not appropriately integrate this treatment into a patient's overall treatment regime through their medical practitioner. The Palaszczuk Government does not support patients cultivating their own cannabis for therapeutic use and does not intend to otherwise legalise or decriminalise the use of cannabis generally. The purpose of providing a legal framework through legislation is to enable legitimate access to medicinal cannabis and ensure there is a pathway to treatment for those that may benefit from this treatment option. On this basis, an amnesty is not supported.

Whole plant medicinal cannabis products are not excluded from this framework; however, it is important that quality controls are in place to ensure that vulnerable patients are not receiving medicinal cannabis products that have an unknown quantity of active ingredients or contain potentially harmful contaminants. Licensed medicinal cannabis manufacturers need to ensure that these quality controls are in place before their product can be provided for therapeutic use in Australia.

Australia does not yet have a medicinal cannabis industry to provide local products, and therefore all medicinal cannabis needs to be imported until the Australian cultivation and manufacturing scheme is operational. On 30 October 2016, the Commonwealth Office of Drug Control commenced receiving applications for the domestic cultivation and manufacture of cannabis for medicinal purposes.

If a person believes that medicinal cannabis may be of benefit for their condition and they have tried the standard treatment modalities, I would encourage them to discuss this with their treating doctor or specialist. The general practitioner or specialist involved in the patient's care may apply for approval to supply medicinal cannabis if they determine there is significant scientific evidence for its effectiveness for that particular condition.

The Palaszczuk Government is creating the most progressive medicinal cannabis laws in the country. This robust framework will ensure medicinal cannabis products can be legitimately prescribed and dispensed to patients in Queensland.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cameron Dick', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**CAMERON DICK MP**

**Minister for Health**

**Minister for Ambulance Services**

30 November 2016