

Resolution 4

Resolution Title: Medical use of marijuana

Wording of Resolution:

That VIEW Clubs of Australia call on State and Federal Governments to legislate regulatory systems which ensure patient access to cannabis and cannabis-related drugs to ease their suffering.

Rationale:

Medicinal cannabis use was legal in Australia until the 1950's but cannabis cultivation and use is now illegal in all Australian jurisdictions for any purpose.

The active ingredient in cannabis has some real medicinal benefits for people with certain medical conditions. Medical practitioners are prevented by law from prescribing cannabis for patients who they believe will benefit from this medication. There are pharmaceutical products containing the active ingredient in cannabis (THC) but none are available in Australia.

Arguments for the resolution:

- In February 2016 the Australian parliament passed national laws paving the way for the use of medicinal cannabis by people with painful and chronic illness. Amendments to the Narcotic Drugs Act permit both legally-grown cannabis for the manufacture of medicinal cannabis products in Australia.
- Research exists that concludes that use of cannabis (consumed through smoking, vapourising, or ingesting the drug) can relieve the symptoms of some serious and terminal medical conditions, and relieve distressing side-effects of some forms of medical treatment.
- There are fewer and less dangerous side effects in using cannabis under medical supervision than other recognised drugs such as morphine, pethidine and fentanyl.
- A number of overseas countries have legalised the medicinal use of cannabis including a number of US States. California is well advanced in the management of cannabis distribution for seriously ill people.
- Enabling cannabis to be prescribed legally will mean that seriously ill patients will no longer have to obtain the substance from cannabis dealers at great expense as is currently often the case.

Arguments against the resolution:

- The New South Wales Government has announced a clinical trial of the medical use of marijuana, making its legal use one step closer in the state.
- In October 2014 a national agreement was signed to conduct a clinical trial of medical cannabis.
- There is a range of initiatives occurring around Australia in relation to decriminalising, or legalising cannabis for specific medical use.