



**Commentary:** Date: 19.4.2018

### **'Regulating' Cannabis: The legalization of yet another psychotropic toxin – Really?**

**"Permission empowered models of drug policy interpretation are driving demand for drug use – NOT prohibition models. The 'law' is not what ruins lives, it's those who tear down that protective fence to simply 'get wasted', that do that!"**

**"Acceptability – Accessibility – Availability, all increase consumption!" D.I**

It is certainly no surprise that the pro-drug, cannabis promoting lobby, manifesting itself through The Greens, continue to employ tired mantras that:

- deny science,
- ignore best health-care practice and
- propagandize harms away, with promises of tax revenues!

Here's the first anomaly: the same lobbyists rail against alcohol harms and seek to limit the pervasive nature of this 'legal' drug – to the point of even stating; *'If alcohol was bought to market for the first time today, it would be prohibited/banned!'* Yet in breathtaking cognitive dissonance they want to unleash cannabis into the same promotable arena that alcohol and tobacco occupy – legal entitlement!

The second anomaly is: the tobacco fiasco – millions of dollars where spent on keeping/promoting cigarettes as not only legal and socially acceptable, but even *healthy for you*. Billions has been spent over the last 50 years dealing with the health outcomes of this drug – and then Billions more spent on driving this legal drug into the pariah space that is pseudo-prohibition!

***Make no mistake, the cannabis industry and those promoting its regulation is just Big Tobacco all over again, but with new and greater levels of pernicious harms.***

The active push to normalise and legitimise Cannabis for 'recreational' use has been in play since late 70's with Richard Cowen, a former Director of NORML (National Organisation for Reform of Marijuana Laws), going on public record (speaking at 1993 conference celebrating the 50 year anniversary of the discovery of LSD) stating *"The key to it [legalizing marijuana for recreational use] is to have 100's of thousands of people using it 'medically' under medical supervision, the whole scam is going to be blown. Once there is medical access and we do what we continually have to do, and we will, then we will get full legalisation!"*

### **The National Drug Strategy**

The latest National Drug Strategy 2017-26, now puts Demand Reduction as the priority!

The strategy states that *"Harm Minimisation includes a range of approaches to help prevent and reduce drug related problems...including a focus on abstinence-oriented*

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*strategies... [Harm minimisation] policy approach does not condone drug use.” (page 6)*  
*“Prevention of uptake reduces personal, family and community harms, allow better use of health and law enforcement resources, generates substantial social and economic benefits and produces a healthier workforce. Demand Reduction strategies that prevent drug use are more cost effective than treating established drug-related problems...Strategies that delay the onset of use prevent longer term harms and costs to the community.” (page 8)*

We need to be reducing demand for cannabis, not increasing it through the undermining of both demand and supply reduction pillars in our National Drug Strategy!

Is the de-facto legalisation and ‘regulation’ of cannabis going to reduce demand, supply and harm, or will it promote/permit the same and to an even wider cohort?

If we have a regulated market for *recreational Cannabis*, will the already law-breaking and recalcitrant users suddenly line up to pay for, a now taxed product? We have seen the ‘black’ or ‘grey’ market on decriminalised prostitution continue alongside the now regulated industry for the simple reason that people do not want to *pay more* or be *regulated* as we are now seeing in the US State of Colorado!

Let us cut through the propagandised mantras about the so called ‘benign nature’ of this plant that buries evidence-based data with emotionalism and ‘big dollar’ revenue rhetoric.

*“If one was to read at least three academically sourced evidence-based articles/resources on the inherent physical, psychological, environmental, genetic, social, productivity, familial & community Harms of this drug, every single day of the year for 10 years, you will still not have read half the current data on the dangers/risks of Cannabis.” D.I*

Submission to the Canadian Senate Standing Committee on Health – for their consideration and review of Bill C.45.2017

*The following is but a snapshot of those harms:*

- Both cannabis intoxication and withdrawal have been linked with violence and homicide including mass shootings.
- Effect on developing brains <sup>1-15</sup>
- Effect on driving <sup>16-26</sup>
- Effect on developmental trajectory and failure to attain normal adult goals (stable relationship, work, education) <sup>17,31-43</sup>
- Effect on IQ and IQ regression <sup>13,44-48</sup>
- Effect to increase numerous psychiatric and psychological disorders <sup>49-62</sup>
- Effect on respiratory system <sup>63-85</sup>
- Effect on reproductive system <sup>7,86-91</sup>
- Effect in relation to immunity and immunosuppression <sup>92-108</sup>
- Effect of now very concentrated forms of cannabis, THC and CBD which are widely available <sup>109,110</sup>

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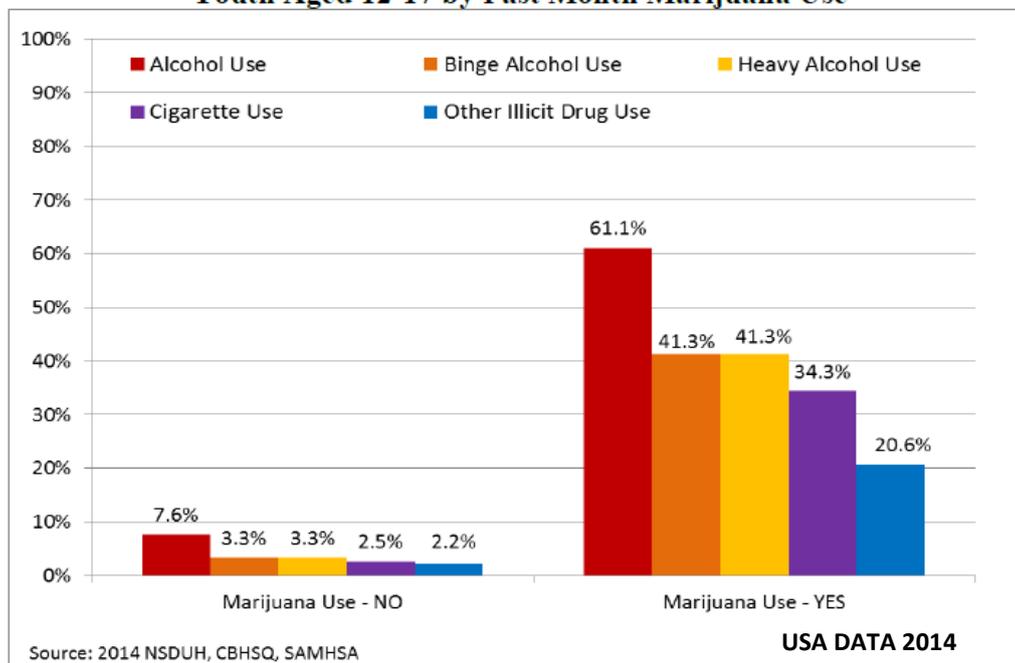
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- Outdated epidemiological studies which apply only to the era before cannabis became so potent and so concentrated <sup>110</sup>.

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- At the cellular level cannabis and cannabinoids have been linked with decreased energy production from mitochondria <sup>13-18</sup>,
- Increased production of inflammation and reduced anti-oxidant defence <sup>16,18,19</sup>;
- Reduced enzymes involved in DNA repair <sup>16</sup>; and increased errors of mitosis which occur due to disruption of the tubulin “rails” of the mitotic spindle <sup>16,19-21</sup> in such a way that chromosomes become left behind and eventually shatter under cellular stress <sup>21,22</sup>;
- Cannabis also stimulates the carcinogenic oncoproteins tumour protein isoform 2 and tumour protein D54 <sup>23,24</sup>;
- Stimulation of lipoxygenase and thromboxane synthase can lead to clotting and coagulation <sup>18</sup>.
- Effect as a Gateway drug to other drug use including the opioid epidemic <sup>27-30</sup>

**Figure 1. Past Month Prevalence of Alcohol, Cigarette and Other Illicit Drug Use among Youth Aged 12-17 by Past Month Marijuana Use**



## The Colorado Chaos!

- [The Legalisation of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact 2017](#)

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- Colorado Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area released its latest report 2017
- The 176-page report details the worsening impact of marijuana on Colorado, including:
  - A 66% increase in marijuana-related traffic deaths
  - A 12% increase in youth marijuana use in the past month
  - A 71% increase in adult marijuana use in the past month
  - A 72% increase in marijuana-related hospitalizations
  - A 139% increase in marijuana-related exposures
  - An 844% increase in parcels of marijuana seized in U.S. mail
  - An 11% increase in crime state-wide
  - Colorado now has more marijuana retail outlets (491) than McDonald's (208) or Starbucks (392)
- **Colorado Governor: *Cannabis legalisation was 'reckless'*** (Business Insider, 2014)
  - Crime rates have gone up, not down in Colorado – arrests of minorities in particular, are increasing.\*
  - Black-market is flourishing – (people don't want to pay tax under the 'regulated' system, so they chose the non-taxed black market product over the government endorsed product – now giving us at least two markets for supply.)\*
  - Cartels now use shop fronts to peddle their product and their presence is growing.\*
  - Youth use is increasing – even though poor data collection in attempting to hide such. \* <https://youtu.be/5mFgll7KEp>
- **Colorado District Attorney: *'Marijuana is gateway drug to homicide'***:  
*A Colorado district attorney drew attention this week after he pronounced marijuana to be a "gateway drug to homicide." District Attorney Dan May came at a news conference Tuesday about a large black-market marijuana bust in the state. Thirteen people have been indicted*  
<http://www.kiro7.com/news/trending-now/colorado-official-marijuana-is-gateway-drug-to-homicide-1/575554174>
- **Marijuana X** – The Documentary the 'Industry' doesn't want you to see!
- **Cannabis Conundrum** 100's of articles on the inherent harms of Cannabis.
- *"It is estimated that there are at least 200,000 people dependent on cannabis in Australia, with one in ten people who try the drug at least once in their lifetime having problems ceasing use!"* (2012)  
<https://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/news/world-first-study-cannabis-withdrawal-management-drug>  
This number has only increased, and this is all while the drug is still in its prohibition category. Permission models only increase access and use.

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### Call for greater accountability from proponents of Cannabis Legalisation - Time to put up or shut up!

How easy has it been in the past for legislators to present such incredibly irresponsible policy measures to unleash (via government approval) the use of Cannabis as a 'recreational' substance. It's time to put your money where your mouth is.

We propose that those sponsoring/voting for such a change to our laws need to be held fiscally accountable for the costs of the harms done by their policies. As architects of a dangerous harm creating social experiment, who believe it to be in best interest of the entire community to, legalize, decriminalise, regulate or otherwise promote access/entitlement to this drug, will then be fiscally accountable for the significant and broad ranging harms that will be incurred by our society as a result.

Any legislation passing that enables further entitlement to cannabis/marijuana should include the names and political parties who sponsor these drug use liberalisation groups. The legislation must include that all costs of harms for said legislation must pay for the negative outcomes – all health, social and welfare costs incurred. The monitoring and measuring of all aforementioned harms due to the liberalization of cannabis will be tallied and annual invoices to levied to Political Parties and individuals promoting such measures, for their remittance. If such accountabilities were in place, proponents would definitely think twice before being so outrageous in their claim.

It's time to get serious about the drug issue as we did with the Tobacco scourge. The War on Tobacco was long, but effective. It's time we had a serious campaign (*for the first time in 30 years*) on illicit drugs.

**We need, as with the *QUIT Tobacco Campaign*, One Focus – Once Message – One Voice** in every key sector in the culture; Government – Education – Media – Policing – Community!

So, who is driving drug policy now – Drug users, or law abiding, best health practice and responsible citizens?

It's time our legislators and policy makers cared more for the clear majority of families, children and the community who do not *use*, or want drug use in their community. Legislators risk looking as though they have succumbed to the highly manipulative, drug-affected minority to further harm the community. These manipulators attempt to assail the law, assault families and damage public health all with the cleverly crafted, weaponised activities of the local 'pot-head' or desperado, currently being given too much 'oxygen' in the public domain.

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