


Drug Free Australia’s Response to the commercialization of Cannabis/Marijuana in Australia






‘Big Marijuana’ companies are targeting Australia as the next potential ‘Canada’ for the profitable commercialization of cannabis. Significant financial investments are being made in setting up very large marijuana and Hemp growing companies and, subsequently, large sums of money are being deployed to protect those emerging investments. Australia's drug policy is being further diluted with the effect of accommodating some of these business interests.

The following organizations support the extensive research of Dr Albert Stuart Reece, MBBS(Hons.), FRCS(Ed.), FRCS(Glas.), FRACGP, MD (UNSW) and Professor Gary Kenneth Hulse, BBS(.(Hons.), MBS(.(PhD.

Their research clearly shows the connection of marijuana to Mental illness, Autism, Congenital anomalies x 62 and Pediatric cancer including testicular cancer. There is also research connecting Cannabis use with Coronavirus infection.

Organisation/supporter	Comment
 <p>Major Brian Watters AO President, Drug Free Australia</p>	<p>Cannabis harms are complex and very real. Australian professionals and communities need to be aware of just how damaging they can be. Drug Free Australia works towards healthier communities and against permissive and unhealthy drug policies that promote use. We especially aim to educate young people and their parents about the harms of marijuana on the ‘developing brain’.</p> <p>www.drugfree.org.au</p>
 <p>Anne Bellavance, Women’s Federation for World Peace: Vice President (Oceania); President WFWP Australia.</p>	<p>UN ECOSOC/DPI/NGO General Consultative Status We support the work of Dr Reece in researching the harms of Cannabis and do not support the commercialisation of Cannabis.</p>
 <p>Phone: +613 9791 8490 <i>WCTU Australia Ltd.</i> President: Anne Bergen</p> <p>Mission Statement: To promote a drug-free lifestyle and Christian values in the home and community.</p>	<p>We hereby wish to say that we support the research that has been conducted by the two Australian medical researchers showing the link between the use of marijuana and major illnesses. Please include Australia WCTU in your active work to help curb the</p>

<p>Joy Marie Butler President - Australia WCTU Field Worker - Africa/PNG WWCTU Coordinator - Joy Safaris</p>	<p>proliferation of marijuana use in our beautiful country. www.wctu.com.au www.wwctu.org Facebook - Women of Faith and Excellence</p>
 <p>Jeffrey Hodges B.Sc. M.Sc.(Hons) B.Ed</p>	<p>You've got my support. Jeffrey</p> <p>https://www.sportsmind.com.au/index.php/sportsmind/about-us/about-jeffrey-hodges</p>
 <p>Shane Varcoe, Executive Director https://www.dalgarnoinstitute.org.au/</p>	<p>See letter below</p>
 <p>Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.</p> <p>Amy Ronshausen Executive Director Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.</p>	<p>https://www.dfaf.org/</p>
	<p>https://www.saveoursociety.org/</p>
 <p>William M. Bennett MD, MACP Legacy Transplant Services</p>	<p>I would like to add my voice to your voices regarding the impact of the commercialisation of cannabis for the Australian population</p> <p>See letter attached</p>

 <p>cannabis conundrum</p> <p>Paul Sukkar - Cannabis Conundrum Tour</p>	<p>cannabisconundrumtour2020@gmail.com Can share this information with others.</p>
 <p>Preda Foundation Fr. Shay Cullen; Emmanuel C. Drewery</p>	<p>https://www.preda.org/ Working with youth, many of whom show signs of cannabis harms.</p>
 <p>Professor John Toumbourou Chair in Health Psychology, Deakin University Deakin University</p>	<p>'Given evidence that cannabis legalisation is associated with increased adult use, vehicle accidents, poisoning and given increased evidence associating adult use with birth disabilities, it is important to resist those arguing to legalise cannabis use in Australia'. See letter attached.</p>
 <p>Dunstan Hartley AFA(WA) Australian Family Association WA https://family.org.au/category/western-australia/</p>	<p>AFA(WA) Supports the work of Dr Stuart Reece in his research to profile the harms and complexities of cannabis and are opposed to the commercialization and promotion of this complex substance in Australia for the purposes of legalisation.</p>
<p>David Berner was the Founder (1967) and Executive Director of Canada's first Residential Treatment Center for addicts, alcoholics and ex-inmates. www.davidberner.com</p>	<p>We support research that reveals the harms of cannabis/marijuana due to the work we do here in Canada.</p>
 <p>C. Gwendolyn Landolt Vice President and Legal Counsel REAL Women of Canada http://www.realwomenofcanada.ca/</p>	<p>Please be assured of our support for your efforts in trying to prevent cannabis companies overcoming Australia as they have in Canada. I will forward your correspondence on to DPNC in order that it also provides written support for your efforts to curtail this serious problem in Australia.</p>
<p>To come: WFAD support</p>	

Vangi Valentin
Program Director
INTER-ACTIONS
Democratic Republic of the Congo

Nana Akwasi Bonsu
Executive Director
Governance Watch.
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**Legacy Transplant Services
Legacy Good Samaritan
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April 20, 2020

Mr. Herschel Baker
International Director
Ms. Josephine Baxter
Executive Director
Drug Free Australia
Email: drugfreeaust@drugfree.org.au

Dear Colleagues:

I would like to add my voice to your voices regarding the impact of commercialization of cannabis for the Australian population. Based on the outstanding research of Dr. Stuart Reece and Prof. Gary Hulse we know that marijuana and its many ingredients add to the burden of mental illness, autism, congenital abnormalities, and many pediatric neoplasms. The use of marijuana during pregnancy and early development is particularly dangerous. To prevent these health impacts of widespread marijuana commercialization and advertising we urge support of Dr. Reece and Prof. Hulse's research, and we urge the Australian authorities to pay attention to their conclusions. The health of the next generation of Australians depends on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William M. Bennett".

William M. Bennett, MD, MACP
Medical Director, Legacy Transplant Services
Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center
Professor of Medicine (Retired)
Oregon Health & Sciences University

WMB/mem



Major Brian Watters AO B.A.
President Drug Free Australia
PO Box 379 Seaford, SA 5169

Re: Dalgarno Institutes Support for the Outstanding (and in part) Seminal Cannabis Research of Professor A. Reece Et al.

Dear Major Watters,

The Dalgarno Institute has an exceptionally long history of education, advocacy and resourcing in the alcohol and other drug arena. As one of the premier and longest running such public interest, Health Education not-for-profits, we have always relied heavily on quality primary and secondary research from both credible and highly professional institutions and academics.

We have found in Messrs Hulse and Reece two such remarkable Professors. These tireless Academics have not simply reviewed and gleaned from already sound data and research but have contributed significantly with their own (and in some instances) seminal research, particularly in the area of [Cannabis](#).

The consistency of both excellence and reliability has meant that our education and advocacy platforms are delivering first rate and vital education to not only schools and students, but their communities and those various governing and shaping sectors.

These family and community benefiting, health and well-being promoting activities are of even greater need with the [current push for not merely legalisation of Cannabis, but the harm permitting accelerator that commercialisation of the same will precipitate.](#)

Big Marijuana – [Big Tobacco 2.0](#) – have had a global agenda at work for some time, and in the chaos of little to poor research, propaganda driven marketplace messaging and the misrepresenting of information and contravention of international drug conventions, Australia is rapidly becoming the emerging target of these addiction for profit enterprises – enterprises that have no compunction in using ‘medicinal’ terms to further their legalisation agenda.

[Good government demands that it not only protect its citizens from harm](#), but also create environments for them to be as productive as possible and in the context of the best health and well-being possible. Such mandates cannot be realized if thorough research, exhaustive clinical trials and best-practice prescriptive regulations and controls are not in place.

To prevent both the unleashing of commercialized harms, along with the meeting of best practice care for the community then quality, credible and unbiased research must be conducted. With both Professors Reece and Hulse (amongst others) we have this in play.

Australia is well placed, thanks in part to these Academics, as global leaders in preventative research on the Cannabis issue. It is time that both peak bodies and governments, not only interrogated this emerging research, but gleaned better practices and policies from its outcomes and recommendations.

The Drug Free Australia correspondence outlines only some of the, literally thousands (and mounting) papers and research on the real and potential harms of this complex plant – cannabis. It behoves all those responsible for the health and well-being of Australian citizens and particularly their children, to look beyond the cacophony of ‘pot propaganda’ and promises of ‘cash from cannabis’, to the complete [evidence-based picture](#).

The Dalgarno Institute not only commends the work of Messrs Hulse and Reece, but urges a new and serious review of all the emerging (and concerning) data around this drug – particularly with the predatorial elements of profiteers who are, in many instances, actively misrepresenting, not only the limited potential of cannabis, but very much down-playing the real and lasting harms of it.

We thank you for your time here, and in advance, for your robust scrutiny moving forward.

Shane W. Varcoe **Executive Director**

TM

(Coalition Of Alcohol & Drug Educators)

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"Over 150 years of minimising harm, by maximising prevention!"

Member of W.F.A.D www.wfad.se

Member of I.S.S.U.P www.issup.net

Member of International Task Force on Strategic Drug Policy www.itfsdp.org
https://twitter.com/#!/NOBRAINER_drugs



29th April 2020
Major Brian Watters AO, B.A.,
President, Drug Free Australia
4/14 Tuffy Avenue, SAN SOUCI, NSW 2219
drugfreeaust@drugfree.org.au

Re: Cannabis Legalisation and Harms.

Dear Brian,

Increasingly cannabis is being legalised for medical and recreational use in different countries, with proponents claiming this will reduce legal and social harm, while providing tax revenue that can mitigate harms. Recent studies are valuable in weighing whether or not cannabis legalisation increases harm. Increased adult cannabis use has been associated with the legalisation of cannabis for medical (Mauro et al, 2019) and recreational use (Parnes et al, 2018; Leyton, 2019). However at this stage, it does not appear that legalisation of recreational use has increased adolescent use (Midgette & Reuter, 2020).

The commercialisation of recreational cannabis sales has been associated with increased fatal vehicle accidents (Aydelotte et al, 2019) and cannabis poisoning events (Shi & Liang, 2020). These effects are less evident for the enactment of recreational cannabis legalisation.

Two recent papers show that in Canada adult cannabis use may adversely affect children. These studies show the use of cannabis was associated with increased rates of preventable child physical disorders at birth - including congenital anomalies, cardiovascular defects, orofacial clefts, Downs syndrome, gastroschisis (where intestines and internal organs protrude outside the body cavity) (Reece & Hulse, 2020a) and neural tube birth defects (Reece & Hulse, 2020b). It is important to note these effects were found prior to Canada's legalisation of recreational cannabis use.

The Australian Capital Territory voted in 2019 to legalise recreational cannabis use. Given evidence that cannabis legalisation is associated with increased adult use, vehicle accidents, poisoning and given increased evidence associating adult use with birth disabilities, it is important to resist those arguing to legalise cannabis use in Australia.

Sincerely,
Professor John Toumbourou
Chair in Health Psychology, Deakin University

References

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