



Re: Government feedback on the following issues and studies related to cannabis and mental health

Drug Free Australia is seeking to bring urgent attention to the Australian and New Zealand Governments, whether Federal or State, regarding extremely important research relating to Mental Health and cannabis use.

It appears that Australian public policies have moved from concern for the health and wellbeing of society by improving and promoting good health to pushing unnecessary drug use for profiteers while charging the tab to society-at-large.

We believe that it is time for governments worldwide to promote research and media publicity which avoids the cherry-picked faux studies used by those wanting to legalise cannabis but rather concentrating on its serious harms to mental and physical health particularly related to early use.

We are seeking your expertise and feedback on the following issues and studies together with your projected plans on these matters:

1. The contribution of cannabis use to variation in the incidence of psychotic disorder across Europe (EU-GEI): a multicentre case-control study

[https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2215-0366\(19\)30048-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2215-0366(19)30048-3/fulltext)

“In conclusion, our findings confirm previous evidence of the harmful effect on mental health of daily use of cannabis, especially of high-potency types. Importantly, they indicate for the first time how cannabis use affects the incidence of psychotic disorder. Therefore, it is of public health importance to acknowledge alongside the potential medicinal properties of some cannabis constituents the potential adverse effects that are associated with daily cannabis use, especially of high-potency varieties.”

2. Cannabis and Psychosis: Recent Epidemiological Findings Continuing the “Causality Debate”

<https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.ajp.2021.21111126>

“The increase in the prevalence of psychosis reported in this issue by Livne et al., which parallels the liberalization of cannabis laws, offers potential opportunities to delineate the causal influence of cannabis on psychosis in a counterfactual or “potential outcomes” framework. It will be critical to follow the trend observed in the study in future waves of nationally representative surveys, to inform public health policy on the mental health impact of recreational cannabis consumption.”

3. **Association of High-Potency Cannabis Use With Mental Health and Substance Use in Adolescence** British Journal of Psychiatry

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/2765973>

“Conclusions and Relevance: *To our knowledge, this study provides the first general population evidence suggesting that the use of high-potency cannabis is associated with mental health and addiction. Limiting the availability of high-potency cannabis may be associated with a reduction in the number of individuals who develop cannabis use disorders, the prevention of cannabis use from escalating to a regular behavior, and a reduction in the risk of mental health disorders.”*

4. **Reviews of cases of Marijuana and Violence**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7084484/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32121373/>

<https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/17/5/1578>

<https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/relationship-between-cannabis-and-violence-review>

[https://www.drugfree.org.au/images/pdf-files/library/Marijuana /A Review of Cases of Marijuana and Violence.pdf](https://www.drugfree.org.au/images/pdf-files/library/Marijuana/A%20Review%20of%20Cases%20of%20Marijuana%20and%20Violence.pdf)

5. **Chronic Marijuana Use and Violence**

[https://d3sdr0llis3crb.cloudfront.net/images/pdf-](https://d3sdr0llis3crb.cloudfront.net/images/pdf-files/library/Brain%20Mental%20Health/Chronic%20Marijuana%20Use%20and%20Violence%20Linkend.pdf)

[files/library/Brain Mental Health/Chronic Marijuana Use and Violence Linkend.pdf](https://d3sdr0llis3crb.cloudfront.net/images/pdf-files/library/Brain Mental Health/Chronic Marijuana Use and Violence Linkend.pdf)

6. **Association Between the Use of Cannabis and Physical Violence in Youth: A Meta-Analytical Investigation**

<https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/full/10.1176/appi.ajp.2020.19101008>

“The results demonstrate a moderate association between cannabis use and physical violence, which remained significant regardless of study design and adjustment for confounding factors (i.e. socioeconomic factors, other substance use). Cannabis use in this population is a risk factor for violence.”

7. Violence and Cannabis Use: A Focused Review of a Forgotten Aspect in the Era of Liberalizing Cannabis

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2020.567887/full>

8. David G. Evans, Esq letter to Attorney General Garland, 16 March 2022

https://d3sdr0llis3crb.cloudfront.net/images/pdf-files/library/Brain_Mental_Health/Mental_Health_Marijuana_NOTE_EXHIBITS_5_MARCH.16.2022.pdf

In regard to the community having grave concerns regarding Marijuana and Violence David comments that there are many factors that increase violence and gun deaths, but marijuana is one of the most significant factors in crime and violence.

For example, there are 65 reports of marijuana-involved mass violence – representing 1000s of deaths and 1000s of injuries. We have no doubt there are many more. Each incident has an informational link to the relevant reports of how marijuana is involved with the perpetrator’s behavior. (Exhibit 5). The perpetrators of mass killings are often marijuana users or used marijuana heavily in adolescence. The Secret Service has reported on this marijuana connection. (Exhibit 6)."

9. Blame Legalized Marijuana for Increased Mass Shootings

<https://cloudflarepoc.newsmax.com/ronaldkessler/booker-harris-sanders-thc/2022/06/01/id/1072447/>

10. TEXAS Uvalde killer and his marijuana use

https://d3sdr0llis3crb.cloudfront.net/images/pdf-files/library/Brain_Mental_Health/TEXAS_Uvalde_killer_and_his_marijuana_use.pdf

11. Cannabis Use and Suicidal Behavior and Long-term Harms—Reply

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2778777>

“The primary aim of our study was to examine associations of cannabis use disorder (CUD) with self-harm, suicide, and overall mortality risk in adolescents and young adults with mood disorders. In this population-based retrospective longitudinal cohort study of Medicaid-enrolled individuals aged 10 to 24 years with mood disorders, more than 10% also had diagnosed CUD. The presence of CUD was significantly associated with increased risk of nonfatal self-harm, all-cause mortality, death by unintentional overdose, and death by homicide.”

Texas data - For 2020, 180 of the 251 child fatalities caused by abuse or neglect involved a parent or caregiver actively using a substance and/or under the influence of at least one substance that affected the ability to care for the child. While opioid use was identified in four child fatalities, marijuana was the substance most identified as an active substance in child abuse and neglect-related fatalities and was identified as prior use in 107 of the cases.

The violence marijuana issue example in the U.S. needs to be included, the issue of marijuana and spousal abuse and child fatalities. This is not just an issue of dozens of mass murders it is happening in homes nationwide impacting massive numbers of innocent children and family members - see page 22

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Reports_and_Presentations/PEI/documents/2021/2021-03-01_FY2020_Child_Fatality_and_Near_Fatality_Annual_Report.pdf

12. Association of Cannabis use with self-harm and mortality risks among youths with mood disorders

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2775255>

13. Recreational marijuana legalisation and domestic violence

<https://everybrainmatters.org/science/marijuana-violence/>

14. Current causes of death in children and adolescents in the United States

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2201761>

“Drug overdose and poisoning increased by 83.6% from 2019 to 2020 among children and adolescents, becoming the third leading cause of death in that age group. This change is largely explained by the 110.6% increase in unintentional poisonings from 2019 to 2020. The rates for other leading causes of death have remained relatively stable since the previous analysis, which suggests that changes in mortality trends among children and adolescents during the early Covid-19 pandemic were specific to firearm-related injuries and drug poisoning; Covid-19 itself resulted in 0.2 deaths per 100,000 children and adolescents in 2020.”

Recommendation

All Australian Governments needs to take this evidence regarding Mental Health very seriously. The issue of cannabis-caused violence needs to be addressed. For example, the Queensland Government here must consider organising several Mental Health teams working 24/7 to evaluate the mental health and wellbeing of those involved in animal cruelty, road rage, spousal abuse and child fatalities. These teams should have the authority to place these individuals into detox and rehabilitation centres for three to twelve months according to their progress. They will also need to be constantly reminded that they are very important to the Australian community’s future.

Here in Queensland, we have two centres available and a third that could be built. They could be equipped at minimum cost and run with existing staff for this mental health program.

1. Queensland Government Regional Accommodation Centre

<https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/industry/queenslands-quarantine-network/queensland-regional-accommodation-centre>

The Queensland Regional Accommodation Centre is Queensland’s first purpose-built accommodation centre located at Wellcamp, 15km from the centre of Toowoomba. It is an investment in keeping Queenslanders safe and supporting our economic recovery.

The Centre forms part of [Queensland’s Whole-of-Government Pandemic Plan](#) and will play a critical role in the State’s isolation and quarantine network. It allows us to enhance existing quarantine and isolation arrangements and provide purpose-built accommodation to safeguard Queenslanders against a **range of public health scenarios**.

The project was announced by the Queensland Government on 26 August 2021, with delivery of the accommodation centre in two stages, with the first 500 beds now operational and available to receive guests from February 2022.

2. Brisbane Immigration Transit Accommodation

100 Sugarmill Road
Pinkenba QLD 4008

<https://www.abf.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/border-protection/immigration-detention/detention-facilities>

3. Fast track construction to build a Detox rehabilitation centre using capital facilities construction at Lavarack Barracks (HLS) Townsville, Queensland

4. The article in the Sunday Courier Mail 5 June 2022 called “**Lost generation dying**” relates a mental health shortage with thousands in peril. The research outcome in this paper has led DFA to reach the conclusion that Mental Health is above politics, and it is in the **National interest to provide staff, resources, support from all Government Departments, community and media.**

5. It is our understanding that all States and Territories have existing **Regional accommodation Centres** which could well be utilised for many of these purposes.

We greatly appreciate your time in responding to these extremely important matters in terms of community health, welfare and safety and would value your response early in the new financial year. Should you require further information and/or a face to face meeting we would be very pleased to accommodate.

Kind Regards

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Prevent. Don't Promote Drug Use

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