



International Medical Associations with Positions on Medical Marijuana

Arthritis Research Campaign (United Kingdom)

"We think people who use cannabis to the pain of arthritis should be able to do so."

Reference: *ARC Statement to BBC News: October 23, 2001*

Australian Medical Association (NSW) Limited

"The AMA (NSW) ... encourage[s] the ... Carr Government to introduce exemptions to current cannabis laws, which would allow the use of the currently prohibited drug, in specific medical cases to alleviate patient suffering and facilitate research."

Reference: *Press release ("New Cannabis Exemption Laws Needed for Medical Use") of the AMA (NSW) Limited: September 30, 1999*

Australian National Task Force on Cannabis

"Despite the positive appraisal of the therapeutic potential of cannabinoids ..., they have not been widely used. ... Part of the reason for this is that research on the therapeutic use of these compounds has become a casualty of the debate in the United States about the legal status of cannabis. ... As a community we do not allow this type of thinking to deny the use of opiates for analgesia. Nor should it be used to deny access to any therapeutic uses of cannabinoid derivatives that may be revealed by pharmacological research."

Reference: *"The health and psychological consequences of cannabis use:" March 1994*

Belgian Ministry of Health

"[R]esearch has shown that cannabis can be of medicinal use. ... This is an area where public health must prevail."

Reference: *Statement of the Health Ministry, as quoted in Expatica.com (Brussels), September 4, 2003.*

British House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology

"Cannabis can be effective in some patients to relieve the symptoms of MS, and against certain forms of pain. This evidence is enough to justify a change in the law. ... The Government should allow doctors to prescribe cannabis for medical use: this is the conclusion of a report by the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, published today."

Reference: *Press release ("Lords Say: Legalise Cannabis for Medical Use") of the House of Lords: November 11, 1998.*

British House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology (Second Report)

"We are concerned that the MCA [Medicines Control Agency] approach to the licensing of cannabis-based medicines ... place the requirements of safety and the needs of patients in an unacceptable balance. ... Patients with severe conditions such as multiple sclerosis are being denied the right to make informed choices about their medication. There is always some risk in taking any medication, ... but these concerns should not prevent them from having access to what promises to be the only effective medication available to them."

Reference: *Select Committee on Science and Technology, Second Report: "Therapeutic Uses of Cannabis:" March 14, 2001.*

British Medical Association

"Present evidence indicates that [cannabinoids] are remarkably safe drugs, with a side-effects profile superior to many drugs used for the same indications. ... [The BMA] will urge the government to consider changing the Misuse of Drugs Act to allow the prescription of cannabinoids to patients with certain conditions causing distress that are not adequately controlled by existing treatments."

Reference: *BMA report: "Therapeutic Uses of Cannabis:" November 1997*

French Ministry of Health

"Obviously, it should be possible to prescribe [cannabis.] For a doctor, that could be a real benefit."

Reference: *statements of French Health Minister Bernard Kouchner: Independent on Sunday, December 7, 1997*

Health Canada

"There is no problem, basically, with marijuana as a medicine. ... Marijuana is no different than morphine, no different than codeine, no different than Aspirin."

Reference: *statements of Health Canada spokesman Dann Michols: Ottawa Citizen, December 19, 1997*

* The Canadian government legalized the use of medical marijuana on July 31, 2001.

Multiple Sclerosis Society (Canada)

"The MS Society of Canada welcomes Health Canada's initiative providing a more compassionate system of possession and production for individuals who feel they may benefit from the use of marijuana for medical purposes."

Reference: *MS Society Viewpoint, July 2001.*

The Multiple Sclerosis Society (United Kingdom)

"People with MS have claimed that [marijuana] has helped them to relieve a number of the symptoms of MS including pain, stiffness and bladder problems. ... We urge the courts to deal sympathetically with people with MS who are charged with cannabis use when seeking relief from their symptoms."

Reference: *Policy statement: "Use of cannabis for alleviation of MS symptoms," adopted August 2003*

Netherlands Ministry of Health*

"Cannabis has a beneficial effect for many patients. From September 1, 2003 pharmacies can provide medicinal

cannabis to patients with a prescription from a doctor."

Reference: *Statement of the Health Ministry, as quoted by Reuters News Wire, September 1, 2003.*

* The Dutch government made marijuana available by prescription on September 1, 2003.

New South Wales (Australia) Parliamentary Working Party on the use of Cannabis for Medical Purposes

"The Working Party is in sympathy with the motivation and spirit of the recommendations in the Institute of Medicine and House of Lords reports. Accordingly, it recommends the introduction in NSW of a compassionate regime to assist those suffering from [a] range of illnesses ... to gain the benefits associated with the use of cannabis without facing criminal sanctions, pending the development of safer and more efficient methods to deliver cannabinoids."

Reference: *"Report of the Working Party on the Use of Cannabis for Medical Purposes," Executive Summary, Recommendation 9: August 2000*

British Medical Journal

"The role of cannabinoids in modern therapeutics remains uncertain, but the evidence ... shows that it would be irrational not to explore it. The active components of a plant which has been prized as a medicine for thousands of years should not be discarded lightly, and certainly not through political expediency or as a casualty of the war on drugs."

Reference: *editorial of the BMJ, April 4, 1998*

Jamaican National Commission on Ganja

"The broad range of potential therapeutic applications of cannabinoids reflects the wide distribution of cannabinoid receptors throughout the brain and other parts of the body. ... Areas in which cannabis has been shown to have therapeutic use are: reducing nausea and vomiting, stimulating appetite, promoting weight gain, diminishing high intraocular pressure from glaucoma. ... There is undoubtedly need for much further research into the potential of the medicinal use of cannabis and its extracts."

Reference: *Report of the National Commission on Ganja, "presented to Parliament August 7, 2001*