

## PERSONAL CORRELATES OF SUPPORT FOR MEDICAL CANNABIS LEGALISATION IN AUSTRALIA

**Authors:** Vivian Chiu<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Janni Leung<sup>1,2,3,5</sup>, Gary Chan<sup>2</sup>, Wayne Hall<sup>2,4</sup>, Leanne Hides<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*School of Psychology, Brisbane, The University of Queensland, Australia,* <sup>2</sup>*Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research, Brisbane, The University of Queensland, Australia,* <sup>3</sup>*National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales Sydney, Australia,* <sup>4</sup>*King's College London, United Kingdom,* <sup>5</sup>*Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, University of Washington, United States*

Presenter's email: [vivian.chiu@uq.net.au](mailto:vivian.chiu@uq.net.au)

**Introduction and Aims:** Public views towards medical cannabis legalisation have not been gauged in depth in Australia. This paper uses data from the 2016 National Drug Strategy Household Survey to examine correlates of public support for medical cannabis legalisation in Australia.

**Design and Methods:** Multinomial logistic regression analysis was used to analyse the relationships between personal characteristics (socio-demographics, mental health status, history of cancer and chronic pain, and personal experience with cannabis and other substances) and support for medical cannabis legalisation.

**Results:** Seventy-nine percent of respondents supported medical legalisation in 2016. In contrast, 17% neither supported nor opposed the policy and only 3.7% opposed it. Females (OR=1.72, 95% CI: 1.71-1.74), older age (50+ years old: OR= 2.66, 95% CI: 2.62-2.69), and higher income were more likely to support medical cannabis legalisation. Self-reported chronic pain (OR= 2.25, 95% CI: 2.20-2.30) and psychological distress (high level: OR=1.25, 95% CI: 1.23-1.27) but not cancer, increased support for legalisation. High-risk drinking and any use of cannabis were associated with support for legalisation, with past-year cannabis use (OR = 18.96, 95% CI: 18.26-19.70) more strongly associated with support than all sociodemographic characteristics combined.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** Most Australians support medical cannabis legalisation and individuals' personal experience with cannabis showed robust association with the supportive attitudes. Some sociodemographic and health characteristics associated with medical cannabis legalisation support maybe related to underlying beliefs about its medical benefits.

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