



Health

The Hon. Dr Brian Walker MLC  
Chair  
Select Committee into Cannabis and Hemp  
Legislative Council  
Parliament of Western Australia  
Email: [scch@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:scch@parliament.wa.gov.au)

Your ref A927066  
Our ref S21/442

Dear Dr Walker

Thank you for your email to Ms Elizabeth Koff, Secretary, NSW Health, inviting NSW Health to make a submission to the Select Committee's inquiry into cannabis and hemp. Ms Koff has asked me to respond.

While NSW Health appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to the inquiry, rather than a submission, information about the regulatory frameworks for cannabis medicines and hemp in NSW has been provided for the Select Committee's interest.

In NSW, cannabis medicines are regulated within a medical framework to ensure patients have confidence in the safety of their medicines and doctors have a wide choice of quality controlled medicines. Any doctor in NSW can legally prescribe a cannabis medicine if they believe it is an appropriate treatment option and they have obtained the relevant authorities. To prescribe an unregistered cannabis medicine for their patient, a doctor must lodge an application using the online system on the Therapeutic Goods Administration website: [www.tga.gov.au/special-access-scheme-online-system](http://www.tga.gov.au/special-access-scheme-online-system). Doctors also need to apply for NSW Health authority if they are seeking to prescribe or supply a Schedule 8 cannabis medicine to a child under 16 years, a drug dependent person or for a clinical trial of an unregistered cannabis medicine.

The NSW Government recognises the therapeutic potential of cannabis medicines and has invested \$21 million in initiatives aimed at building the evidence base, improving patient access and educating clinicians and the community about cannabis medicines. These initiatives include investing over \$9 million in clinical trials evaluating the safety and effectiveness of cannabis medicines, publishing information for patients and health professionals on the Centre for Medicinal Cannabis Research and Innovation (CMCRI) website and establishing a Cannabis Medicines Help Line for members of the public. The NSW Government also established the NSW Cannabis Medicines Advisory Service to provide free expert clinical advice for health professionals in NSW. For further information, please see the CMCRI website: [www.medicinalcannabis.nsw.gov.au/about/cannabis-medicines-program](http://www.medicinalcannabis.nsw.gov.au/about/cannabis-medicines-program).

In NSW, cultivation of low-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) hemp is regulated at the state level. The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) operates a licensing scheme which regulates the cultivation of low-THC hemp in NSW. Under section 5 of the *Hemp Industry Act 2008* (NSW), a licence authorising a person to cultivate or supply low-THC hemp can be granted for specified purposes, including commercial production, use in manufacturing processes or for scientific research, analysis or study. For further information, please see: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/broadacre-crops/summer-crops/hemp/nsw-hemp-industry](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/broadacre-crops/summer-crops/hemp/nsw-hemp-industry).

NSW Ministry of Health  
ABN 92 697 899 630  
1 Reserve Road, St Leonards NSW 2065  
Locked Mail Bag 2030, St Leonards NSW 1590  
Tel (02) 9391 9000 Fax (02) 9391 9101  
Website: [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

In November 2017, hulled hemp seeds from low-THC plants and food derived from hemp seeds became legally available for sale and consumption in NSW. This decision was made following extensive research that there were no food safety or public health risks associated with low-THC hemp food products that met requirements of the Australia New Zealand Standards Code (the Code). All low-THC hemp seed food products must comply with the Standard 1.4.4 of the Code. The NSW Food Authority is responsible for ensuring low-THC hemp seed foods produced or manufactured in NSW comply with the Code. For further information, see:

[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Documents/retailfactsheets/low\\_THC\\_hemp.pdf](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Documents/retailfactsheets/low_THC_hemp.pdf)

Additional information is available from [www.medicinalcannabis.nsw.gov.au](http://www.medicinalcannabis.nsw.gov.au). Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely

Sophie Tyner  
**Director, Office of the Chief Health Officer**