Patient Access to Medicinal Cannabis in South Australia - Overview

From 1 November 2016, medical practitioners in South Australia can prescribe S8 medicinal cannabis products for therapeutic use. These are the key steps to accessing medicinal cannabis with links to more detailed information. Note: cannabidiol preparations for therapeutic use containing 2% or less of other cannabinoids found in cannabis are S4 medicines. Supply of S4 cannabidiol medicines requires a prescription from a medical practitioner and Commonwealth

approval or notification.



A specialist medical practitioner, in discussion with their patient, considers the clinical information and evidence for medicinal cannabis in the condition to be treated.

Conditions where there may be some evidence include multiple sclerosis, severe intractable epilepsy in children, intractable nausea and vomiting due to chemotherapy.

For more information about evidence for use refer to the Fact Sheet Medicinal Cannabis Evidence and Reviews

Step Identify a suitable medicine.

Different medicinal cannabis products may be used for different conditions.

Products include synthetic compounds such as nabilone and nabiximols (Sativex®) and products containing cannabinoids such as cannabidiol and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

Considerations in product selection include dosage regimen, formulation, cost and availability, noting some products may need to be imported.

For more information about medicinal cannabis products refer to the <u>Fact Sheet Medicinal Cannabis Products</u> or contact the TGA on 1800 220 007.

Step Seek approvals or make notification to the Commonwealth and SA Health.

Commonwealth approval or notification

Registered medical practitioners wanting to access unapproved medicinal cannabis products for the appropriate treatment of patients outside of clinical trials may choose to do so through the Special Access Scheme (SAS) or Authorised Prescriber Scheme (AP).

- Determine requirements under SA Controlled Substances legislation (see State approval and exemptions)
- > Make an application or notification under the SAS or AP.
- > Apply for a licence and permission to import, if necessary.
- Comply with conditions of approval/authorisation and ongoing regulatory requirements.

Step
4 Prescription, supply and dispensing of medicinal cannabis product.

The product may be prescribed by the authorised medical practitioner and dispensed at a pharmacy.

State approval and exemptions

The prescribing and supply of medicinal cannabis Schedule 8 medicines is regulated under section18A of the Controlled Substances Act 1984.

Medical practitioners should contact the Drugs of Dependence Unit (DDU) on 1300 652 584 to discuss the specific authority requirements or visit the webpage for an application form.

A section 18A authority is required after 2 months of treatment, or <u>before</u> commencing treatment where the person is already prescribed a Schedule 8 drug (for a period exceeding 2 months) and for any person the medical practitioner reasonably believes to be dependent on drugs

Exemptions:

A section 18A authority is not required for patients:

- > aged 70 years or older
- > who are Notified Palliative Care Patients
- who are not drug dependent, for regular use for a period of less than 2 months.

Applications for authority to prescribe Schedule 8 medicinal cannabis may be referred to an expert clinical panel for assessment and advice.