



Participant Information Sheet

Project Title: Public perceptions on the use of cannabidiol to treat symptoms of mental ill-health

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General Outline of the Project:

Research Description: The use of cannabis medicines to treat a range of health conditions is rapidly increasing. Little is known about public perceptions of cannabis medicines in Australia. This research aims to improve our understanding of people's perceptions on the use of cannabidiol (CBD), a component of the cannabis plant, as a medicine to treat symptoms of mental ill-health. In this survey, we will investigate people's thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward their use, or supporting others use, of CBD as a treatment. The information gathered from this survey will inform ongoing mental health needs of individuals and communities in Australia, with practical implications for addressing barriers and access to cannabis medicines. This research is being conducted for the purposes of post-doctoral, staff and student research at the University of Wollongong and the Australian National University.

Participant Involvement:

Eligible Participants: We invite all persons, whether or not you have knowledge of cannabis medicines, to participate in this research. The survey is open to all persons who: a) are aged 18 years or older; b) have lived in Australia since July 2018; and c) can read and write English well enough to complete the survey. We are seeking approx. 1500 volunteers to complete the survey.

Participant Requirements: In this survey, participants will be asked questions about their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward CBD as a medicine. Participants will be asked questions that may be personal in nature, including: a) age and employment; b) political affiliation; c) past and recent experience with CBD, cannabis medicines and recreational cannabis; d) lifestyle activities, such as alcohol use; e) physical health symptoms, such as chronic pain and general health; f) mental health, including panic attacks and thoughts about harming yourself; and g) knowledge about accessing CBD and willingness to use or support others use of CBD as a medicine. Many of these questions align to a western conceptualisation of mental health and wellbeing. Some examples of the types of questions participants will be asked to respond to include: *'How much do you know about CBD as a medicine?'*, *'How open would you be to using CBD as a treatment?'*, *'Do you know how to legally*



access CBD under the care of a health professional?’, ‘If your doctor was to suggest CBD as a health treatment, how likely are you to consider using it?’.

Location and Duration: The survey is approximately 15-minutes in length. The survey can be completed online by visiting the research website listed below, or you can visit this website to register for a postal version of the survey that you can complete and return. If you need a break while completing the online survey, your responses will be saved and you can return to it by using the original survey link for up to 12 hours.

Participation Benefits:

Benefits of the Research: This research aims to further our understanding of the public’s perception on CBD as a treatment for mental ill-health and how these perceptions impact individuals and communities who are considering alternative health treatments. You may not benefit directly from this research however, the knowledge gained from this research will inform the ongoing needs of individuals and communities across Australia in accessing CBD as a medicine. It is intended that these outcomes be of practical use to health professionals, communities, and policy makers to shape local and national strategies for cannabis-based medicines.

Remuneration: Participating in this study will involve up to 15 minutes of your time. For participants recruited via social media pathways, this will involve being without compensation. In line with UOW and ANU School of Psychology policy, participants recruited via the UOW or ANU Psychology SONA scheme who successfully complete the study will be awarded 0.5 credit points towards an undergraduate psychology subject of the student’s choice. SONA will be set up with a survey code embedded and will redirect back to SONA on survey completion so that the 0.5 credit points are automatically allocated and no identifying information (e.g., student number) is required.

Possible Risks, Inconveniences and Discomforts:

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time. When completing the online survey, your responses will automatically save each time you move to the next page. You can stop by closing your internet browser. If you’d like to delete answers you have submitted up to that point, click the “Exit Survey” button and select “delete my data”. Once you have submitted the online survey, exited, and not returned to the survey, or returned the postal survey, you will not be able to withdraw your responses as your information is anonymous and will not be able to be identified. You may select the “prefer not to say” option for any question you do not feel comfortable answering. Incomplete responses, such as exiting the survey before completion or submitted responses missing answers, will not be included, and will be deleted. Withdrawing or not completing the study will not affect your relationship with the researchers or their respective academic institutions in any capacity.

Risks: People have unique experiences with regards to their mental health. It is important to remember that you may skip questions by selecting the ‘*prefer not to say*’ option or stop the survey



at any time. If you begin to feel distressed at any point, we encourage you to discontinue the survey (without prejudice) and contact your local GP, a mental health support service, Lifeline (131 114) or any of the resources provided below to discuss your experience. Admitting to the use of an illicit substance is *not* incriminating and you will *not* be asked to disclose information on criminal activities. Your responses will remain anonymous. The following website provides information about the legal risks of cannabis use and possession for your further interest:

<https://www.druginfo.sl.nsw.gov>.

Privacy and Confidentiality: Your confidentiality will be protected as far as the law allows. All survey responses will be recorded anonymously and only made available to approved members of the research team. New team members will be approved by an ethics board and limited to conducting research activities that are consistent with the original aims of this survey. Findings based on group data from the study will be published in academic journals, reported in student theses, presented at academic conferences, and may be reported in summary format to general media. A report of the research findings will be made available to the public and posted on our project website listed below. Individual results cannot be identified and will not be reported. The data from this survey will be securely stored at the University of Wollongong and accessible only to the researchers coordinating the project. The data will be stored at the University of Wollongong and may be used by the named researchers in similar studies to guide future research. The data may be archived or deleted at the conclusion of the research program.

Ethics Review and Complaints:

This study is being co-lead and will be monitored by Dr Jessica Bartschi at the University of Wollongong, and Dr Lisa-Marie Greenwood at the Australian National University. This study has been reviewed by the Health and Medical Human Research and Ethics Committee (HREC) at the University of Wollongong (2022/215). However, if you have any concerns or complaints regarding the way in which this study is conducted, please contact the University of Wollongong Ethics Office (uow-humanethics@uow.edu.au) or the Australian National University Human Research Ethics Committee (human.ethics.officer@anu.edu).

Additional Resources:

If you feel distress at any point, nationally available support services include: Lifeline (lifeline.org.au or 13 11 14), Beyond Blue (beyondblue.org.au or 1300 22 4636), and the Suicide Call Back Service (1300 659 467). Links to further supports can be found here on our project website listed below.

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