



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Media Release

More medical cannabis research needed

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The Royal Australasian College is renewing its calls for more research, ahead of an expected move by federal senators to endorse a Bill legalising medical cannabis.

RACP President, Laureate Professor Nick Talley said while the College is a strong supporter of medical cannabis trials, more evidence into its use is still needed.

“Medical cannabis will present a unique set of dilemmas for the Australian community and doctors,” Professor Talley said.

“Even in countries where medical cannabis is already legal, there is the on-going unsolved issue of how a doctor accurately prescribes medicinal cannabis for a patient.”

While the RACP welcomes the progressive approach by the federal senators, Professor Talley said any move towards legalising medical cannabis must be purely evidence-based and not political.

“At this point in time there is no standard dose of cannabis, which means a lot of it comes down to trial and error,” Professor Talley said.

“Even more concerning is that each plant can provide massively different drug doses. This could present another set of problems for patients and doctors, where using it one time may work, but on other occasions it may fail or cause a patient to be sick.”

Further to this, there is currently very little research into what constitutes an appropriate or regular dose for specific conditions.

“It is vital that as society looks for ways to use cannabis in medicine and for pain relief, we remember that the best way doctors prevent further harm is by relying on proven and fact-based evidence,” Professor Talley said.

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