

Participant Information Statement

Cannabis Use and Cultivation in the Australian Capital Territory following Legislative Changes (CAN-ACT) Study

Short title:	CAN-ACT study
HREC Number:	XXX-XXX-XXX
Research Institute:	Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics, University of Sydney
Principal Investigator:	Dr Richard Kevin (Principal Investigator) Phone: +61 2 9114 4238 Email: richard.kevin@sydney.edu.au

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in the 'CAN-ACT' study because you are an adult living in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) with current or prior experience with using or growing cannabis.

This Participant Information Sheet tells you about the research project. It also describes information about you that will be obtained, how that information will be used and with whom it will be shared. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research.

Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you do not understand or want to know more about. The research team's contact details are on page 3 of this document.

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to. If you decide to participate, at the beginning of the survey, you will be presented with a Consent Form to read and confirm your consent by clicking 'Submit'. This will confirm that you understand what you have read and consent to take part in this research study.

This Participant Information Sheet is for you to keep.

What is the background of this study?

New cannabis cultivation and possession laws came into effect in the ACT in January 2020, allowing ACT residents to grow and possess small quantities of cannabis. These laws are unique within Australia and offer a rare opportunity to examine the outcomes of cannabis legalisation in a local community setting. Of particular interest is how ACT cannabis users have responded to these changes and whether legalisation of cannabis facilitates medicinal cannabis use and influences access to prescribed medicinal cannabis products.

The study survey will provide critical insight into how and why individuals are accessing, using and growing cannabis, including knowledge of the current law and preferences around future reforms. It is also of interest to determine the medical conditions that are being treated with legal homegrown cannabis and whether the cannabis being grown has a typical "intoxicating" profile involving high

delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and low cannabidiol (CBD). We will anonymously collect and analyse samples of cannabis grown and/or possessed by ACT residents to quantify cannabinoid content and check for the possible presence of contaminants such as heavy metals and pesticides.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the project is to ascertain how the recent cannabis legalisation in the ACT has influenced the use of cannabis and access to cannabis. This project will indicate whether the legalisation of cannabis in the ACT has been an effective policy change and may have important implications for future policy change in Australia. Additionally, the study will add to the growing body of literature examining the medicinal application of cannabinoid therapies in the community more broadly.

Who is running the study?

The study is being conducted by the Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics at the University of Sydney, a philanthropically-funded research body that conducts research into medicinal cannabis.

Who can take part in the study?

You can take part in this research study if you are:

- Aged 18 years or over
- Living in the ACT (Australia)
- Has *current* or *prior* experience with *using* or *growing* cannabis for medicinal or non-medical (recreational) purposes

What is involved in the study?

This study has two components. If you decide to take part in this study, you will first be invited to participate in a **short online survey**. The survey is strictly confidential and anonymous and you will not be asked any identifying information.

After you complete the survey, you can register to have your home-grown or personally held **cannabis samples analysed** for cannabinoid and contaminant content. *This is not a mandatory requirement for taking part in the study.* Participants choosing to have their cannabis analysed will be provided with an anonymised participant code and password that can be used later to view individualised results of sample analysis via a secure online database. The participant code will also be used to arrange sample collection with an independent courier.

How much time will my involvement in the study take?

The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete. If you choose to have your cannabis sample analysed, it will take around 2 minutes to register; however, additional time will be required to organise sample pickup with the independent study courier.

Are there any risks associated with participating in the project?

No identifying information (your name or contact details) or IP addresses will be collected that could link you to the survey information that you submit. This protects your anonymity and mitigates any legal risk.

If you decide to have your cannabis sample analysed, you will need to package your sample with your unique participant code and provide the independent courier with a pick-up address. You may choose to not use your residential address. The courier will confidentially store this information and it will not be disclosed to anyone, including the members of the research team.

What are the potential benefits of the research project to me?

Participants will be offered the opportunity to have their cannabis samples tested to quantify cannabinoid content (e.g., THC, CBD) and check for the presence of contaminants (e.g., pesticides, heavy metals). Participants will be able to access their individualised results via a secure online database.

More broadly, the study aims to provide insights into the outcomes of recent ACT cannabis legalisation, within an Australian context, which may be of personal interest. This study could have significant implications for future policy change in Australia.

Will I be paid to take part in this study?

No, you will not be paid to take part in this study.

Will I incur any costs for cannabis sample analysis?

No. The study sponsor will cover all costs associated with sample transport and analysis.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary, you can withdraw at any time by simply closing your web browser. However, as the survey is anonymous, survey data already collected will be retained because the research team will be unable to locate your personal survey responses and delete them.

What will happen with my information?

Your data will only be used for the purpose of research as described in this Participant Information Sheet. Your survey data is completely anonymous and we will be unable to identify your specific responses. Only the principal investigator and the research team will have access to your data.

The overall results of this study will be published in an aggregated or group format in scientific journals accessible to the public. Free access to these publications will be ensured so that any member of the community, including survey participants, can freely access these results. Results may also be presented at academic conferences. The anonymised data may also be used for future research purposes limited to the work of the Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics at the University of Sydney.

Who has reviewed the research project?

All research in Australia involving humans is reviewed by an independent group called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The **XX** Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)

incorporating all updates. This Statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project or would like to participate?

General enquiries

If you are interested in participating or have any questions or would like additional information, please contact:

Name	Isobel Lavender
Position	Research Assistant
Telephone	XXXX
Email	isobel.lavender@sydney.edu.au

To raise a concern or a complaint

If you have questions or problems associated with the practical aspects of your participation in the survey or wish to raise a concern or complaint about the project, please consult the Principal Investigator.

Name	Dr Richard Kevin
Position	Principal Investigator
Telephone	XXXX
Email	richard.kevin@sydney.edu.au

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The study has been approved by the [XX] Ethics Committee (approval number [xxxx]). This research project will be conducted according to the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). If you wish to speak with an independent person regarding concerns or a complaint, the University's policy on research involving human participants, or your rights as a participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee's Secretariat on:

Name	XXXX
Position	XXXX
Telephone	XXXX
Email	XXX

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

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