

Medical Cannabis

“The Controlled Access Scheme is a leap forward for Tasmanians as the efficacy of medical cannabis will be safely trialled under the supervision of prescribing medical specialists.”

Epilepsy Tasmania CEO, Wendy Groot.

From September 1, the Controlled Access Scheme (CAS) will allow Tasmanians with serious, unresponsive medical conditions to access unregistered medical cannabis products when prescribed by a medical specialist.

GP and Epilepsy Tasmania Board Member, Dr Elizabeth Lord, said “There is potential for medical cannabis to help some people control their epileptic seizures when all other options have failed. Until now, people with severe refractory seizures or catastrophic epilepsy syndromes have been unable to access and trial medical cannabis as an anti-epileptic treatment option.”

CEO of Epilepsy Tasmania, Ms Wendy Groot, said “We support the use of medical cannabis under specialist medical supervision for the management of epilepsy. We also hope the CAS will result in ongoing scientific trials and research into the use and efficacy of medical cannabis, while improving quality of life and reducing hospital admissions for people living with epilepsy.”

Tasmania’s state Budget, released in May 2017, allocated \$3.75 million towards the comprehensive clinical assessment of patients who may be eligible for medical cannabis due to being non-responsive to mainstream medications.

“A crucial component to the success of the CAS are GPs having confidence that there are neurologists and neurological nurses available within the clinical services to prescribe, monitor and support people.”

“Epilepsy Tasmania is liaising with the Hodgman Liberal Government to ensure that GP’s and Tasmanians have resources and access to information about the referral process, as well as knowledge about the products,” said Ms Groot.

Products prescribed under the scheme will be dispensed through the Tasmanian Health Service pharmacies, ensuring patients will pay no more than the legislated Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme co-payment.

-ENDS-

MORE INFORMATION: Claire Burnet 0448 585 947 / www.epilepsytasmania.org.au

ABOUT EPILEPSY:

- Epilepsy is a common brain disorder that takes the form of recurring seizures.
- It can develop at any age regardless of ethnicity or gender.
- One in 10 people will experience a seizure during their life.
- One in 25 Australians (20,000 Tasmanians) will develop epilepsy during their life.

CONNECT WITH EPILEPSY TASMANIA ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Twitter: @epilepsytas
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EpilepsyTasmania/>
Hashtags: #epilepsytasmania #donatetothelavender

SPOKESPEOPLE:

- Epilepsy Tasmania chief executive officer - Ms Wendy Groot.

ABOUT EPILEPSY TASMANIA:

We are a not-for-profit association improving the quality of life and community participation of Tasmanians living with or affected by epilepsy.

ABOUT DONATE TO THE LAVENDER:

Epilepsy Tasmania is a Tasmanian not-for-profit association significantly reliant upon donations and grants, and understood to be the only one providing on-the-ground services and support in Tasmania for Tasmanians who live with or are affected by epilepsy.

During our major annual fundraiser this March - International Epilepsy Awareness Month - we are noticing an increasing number of interstate charities collecting donations within Tasmania yet not providing actual services or support here.

To prevent misunderstanding and stop much-needed donations from being taken out of our state, Epilepsy Tasmania has introduced its **Donate to the Lavender** logo: when you see this logo or the name **Epilepsy Tasmania**, rest assured your donation will stay in Tasmania and be used to help Tasmanians.

