



## NEW ZEALAND MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

23 April 2010

Drugs Review Submissions  
Law Commission  
PO Box 2590  
**Wellington 6140**

By email: [drugsreview@lawcom.govt.nz](mailto:drugsreview@lawcom.govt.nz)

### **Controlling and Regulating Drugs – Use of Cannabis for Medicinal Purposes**

The NZMA is New Zealand's largest medical organisation and has a pan professional membership. We have around 4500 members who come from all areas of medicine.

The NZMA aims to provide leadership of the medical profession, and promote:

- professional unity and values;
- the health of New Zealanders.

The key roles of the NZMA are to:

- provide advocacy on behalf of doctors and their patients;
- provide support and services to members and their practices;
- publish and maintain the Code of Ethics for the profession; and
- publish the New Zealand Medical Journal.

We wish to comment on only one aspect of this review; the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes. The NZMA has a long standing position that the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes is acceptable provided it is subject to the same evidence based testing as any other drug used for the same reason.

That is, for the appropriate medical use of cannabis to be endorsed, medical practitioners would require it to be viewed and treated as a drug and conditions surrounding its prescription and use would then be determined in a like manner to other drugs and treatment regimes. Prescriptions would be by a registered medical

practitioner for specified conditions where other available treatments or drug therapies have not been effective or have produced unmanageable side effects.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Foley', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Peter Foley  
**Chair, NZMA**