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Guide to prescribing cannabis welcomed

AMA Queensland is pleased that the guidelines on prescribing medicinal cannabis have been released. However, doctors will need further clarification to enable them to have full confidence in prescribing cannabis.

President Dr Chris Zappala said AMA Queensland looked forward to continuing to work with Queensland Health to ensure doctors had adequate information about the legislation before it comes into effect on 1 March.

“Cannabis has not undergone the rigorous process of clinical testing that we expect for drugs regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration,” Dr Zappala said.

“Doctors are interested in ongoing discussion with Government, regulators and the community to support and allow the conduct of appropriate clinical trials to safeguard medicinal cannabis use while we are still learning about its potential to help patients.

“With the lack of clinical evidence supporting the use of medicinal cannabis, doctors must be assured that the State will protect them if they prescribe it in good faith and according to the legislated approval process.”

AMA Queensland will host a seminar for GPs and specialists on 23 February to explain the legislation and guidelines.

“In this way, we aim to ensure doctors fully understand which medical conditions cannabis may be prescribed for, how to apply for approval to prescribe, and the monitoring and reporting requirements that apply,” Dr Zappala said.

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AMA Queensland is the state's peak medical body which exists to advance the professional interests of doctors and the health of the community. It is an independent organisation representing more than 6,200 doctors – from residents and registrars to public and private specialists and general practitioners.