

MEDICAL CANNABIS

938. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer the minister to the paper from academics at the University of Sydney titled *Medicinal cannabis use in Australia* published in the *Harm Reduction Journal* on 30 July 2022, which concludes that over the course of surveys undertaken in 2016, 2018, 2021 more than a tenfold increase in the use of prescribed medicinal cannabis can be seen across Australia.

- (1) Given that all applications lodged in Western Australia have to be copied to the Department of Health, is the minister able to provide the number of patients using prescription cannabis here in July 2016, July 2018, and July 2021 respectively?
- (2) Does any increase track with the nationwide data provided by the Sydney academics; and, if not, in what manner do local trends here in WA differ?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health.

- (1) The Western Australian Department of Health receives applications for medicinal cannabis products classified as schedule 8 medicines (controlled drugs). The numbers of medicinal cannabis applications to the Western Australian Department of Health include zero to July 2016, 96 to July 2018, and 6 422 to July 2021.
- (2) Based on applications received by the Department of Health, numbers of patients receiving medicinal cannabis in Western Australia have been increasing over the period between 2016 and 2021, broadly in line with national trends.