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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Montu outlines to TGA adverse patient impact of medical cannabis ad regulations**

**26 September, Melbourne** - Montu, Australia's leading plant medicine company, has provided a submission to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), urging it to amend its advertising guidelines to allow public mention of the term 'medical cannabis'.

Montu understands the TGA is currently working to update its advertising guidelines, which at present do not allow the use of the term 'cannabis' when describing medical cannabis products and services.

Montu provided two submissions to the TGA on its draft update of the guidelines – one from its online patient clinic Alternaleaf, and one from its wholesale arm, Leafio.

"There is a real impact on our patients and our clinicians who are trying to deliver a much-needed service to everyday Australians, which our industry is currently banned from being able to accurately describe," said Christopher Strauch, Managing Director at Montu.

"Most of our doctors have qualifications in medical cannabis and who can't make this specialisation known when speaking publicly about the type of care they are qualified to provide.

"Medical cannabis should be used as a term to speak plainly. This is firmly in the patient interest and aligns with the TGA's own plain English guidelines – two of the many key issues we have outlined in our submission."

The current requirement to avoid the term 'medical cannabis' has caused confusion and uncertainty for some Montu patients, when it came to them considering their treatment options. As a stop-gap, the medical cannabis industry in Australia has been using terms such as 'plant medicine', and 'plant-based medicine'.

"I couldn't understand what the service was about at all because it was very vague. I thought it might have been referring to herbal supplements, and as most herbal medicine is dubious and vague in nature, I thought it was a scam," said Montu patient Julian Skerra.

“I only found out what plant medicine actually was from some of the comments making reference to medicinal cannabis, such as using terms like ‘flower’. Only then did it click for me.”

Another Montu patient, Nabzi Sabzi, agrees. “I actually always thought ‘plant medicine’ was a scam until I met someone who was actually a patient, which made me give it a go – and I’m kicking myself for not researching it more years ago.”

The submission provided by Alternaleaf outlines the criticality of patient awareness, and how plain English would enable immediate understanding of the types of products the clinic is able to prescribe to eligible patients.

The submission made by wholesale brand Leafio – which supplies pharmacies around Australia with medical cannabis products – outlines how wholesalers should be able to list brands to prospective pharmacy partners to help navigate a complex and problematic supply landscape.

“Montu believes in providing information in a way that people can understand, so they can make proper and informed decisions when it comes to managing their health,” said Mr Strauch.

“As more than a million prescriptions have now been provided to Australians for medical cannabis products, this is no longer a fringe issue.

“We hope the TGA takes our views on board on behalf of our existing and potential patients, and reflects the need to evolve messaging in medical cannabis advertising in its revised advertising guidelines.

“At the heart of it, we are advocating for a commonsense approach to our industry.”

Read Montu’s two submissions to the TGA [here](#).

## **About Alternaleaf**

Alternaleaf is Australia’s largest medical cannabis clinic, trusted by more than 100,000 Australians. Connecting patients with highly trained nurses and doctors through an innovative telehealth system, Alternaleaf prides itself on its easy-to-use and empathetic clinical experience.

## **About Montu**

Founded in 2019, Montu’s goal is to remove the barriers that prevent patients from accessing plant medicine. Montu has built an integrated plant based medicine ecosystem, which streamlines the experience for patients end-to-end, and sets new standards in plant based medical care. We connect Australians to highly qualified doctors, and support them throughout their journey with our dedicated patient care team. Our mission: improve the lives of millions of Australians through enabling access to plant-based medicines.

## **Contact**

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**MONTU**

*Creating the future of plant-based medicine today*

