



PRESS RELEASE

Medical cannabis passes 1 million prescriptions for 130+ conditions - but stigma still runs rampant

26 October, Sydney - Alternaleaf is Australia's largest medical cannabis clinic, providing high-quality medical care to thousands of patients every week. However, in a recent survey, three-in-five reported keeping their treatment secret due to prejudice and social stigma.

The survey of more than 6,000 medical cannabis patients showed that 61% were reluctant to discuss their medical treatment, with many citing concerns around perceptions of cannabis in the community.

Australian doctors have issued more than a million prescriptions for medical cannabis products, but misunderstanding and judgement remains rampant in the broader community, creating anxiety for patients who are worried about how they may be perceived by friends, family and colleagues.

Zhia Zariko, a patient with Alternaleaf, is proud to speak out on behalf of those patients who can't themselves due to social or employment concerns.

"The problem is that there is a considerable stigma around taking medical cannabis, despite it being prescribed by your doctor like any other medication," she said.

"I'm an academic and university lecturer, and take medical cannabis for anxiety and sleeping issues. I am fully functional, capable and properly able to do everything on my medication – so that stigma still being a problem is why it's so important to talk about it."

Kelly King, Montu spokesperson, said she was proud the company was empowering its patients to break down these issues.

"The statistics are clear: medical cannabis is a legitimate treatment option for those living with more than 130 common and chronic conditions," she said.

"No one should be judged for using medical cannabis to manage their condition – and when this is a problem that our patients continue to raise with us, it's our responsibility to talk about in the public eye, and improve perceptions of medical cannabis use in Australia.

"There is no reason we should be treating medical cannabis patients differently to those taking any other prescription medication."

Montu is continuing to release information and statistics on the stigma surrounding medical cannabis, in an effort to lower perceived barriers and improve the medication's accessibility for Australian patients.

For more information about Montu, visit montu.com.au.

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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 is Australia's leading medical cannabis company. Across a rapidly growing ecosystem, Montu is using technology to improve the medical cannabis patient experience, from delivering best-in-class clinical care, to our industry-leading product lines and innovative supply chain management tools. Our mission: to make medical cannabis more affordable and accessible for the millions who could benefit.

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