
MEDIA RELEASE

**ONLINE 'KNOWLEDGBASE' PAINTS MOST COMPREHENSIVE AND
UP-TO-DATE PICTURE YET OF CANNABIS USE IN AUSTRALIA**

You're three times more likely to crash while on it; 30-39 year olds are most likely to have had a puff; 18-24 year olds cannabis used it most in the past 12 months; a third of all Australians over 14 years old have used it; yet most Aussies are *really* against it.

These are among the latest findings on Australian cannabis use being made available to the general public from Monday on Flinders University's National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction's (NCETA) National Alcohol and Drug Knowledgebase.

The Knowledgebase, developed by NCETA with the support of the Australian Government Department of Health, is the only publically accessible, centrally located source of comprehensive alcohol and drug information, and utilises a diverse range of data and presents key information in a consistent and easy to use format.

NCETA Director, Professor Ann Roche, said the Knowledgebase – which includes 88 FAQs on cannabis - shows that approximately one-third of Australians aged 14 years and over had used cannabis, and that one in ten had used it in the past 12 months.

Professor Roche said it also included information about how cannabis was being used in the workplace and how much it was being used in individual sectors.

“People aged 30-39 years are more likely than other age groups to have used cannabis in their lifetime, while those aged 18-24 years are more likely than other age groups to have used it in the past 12 months,” said Professor Roche.

“The proportion of employed Australians who have used cannabis in the past 12 months also varies according to their industry of employment, with those employed in hospitality (23%) more likely to have used cannabis in the past 12 months, compared to people employed in other industries such as construction and retail.”

As well as those statistics, information on increased risks to the safety of users and those around them is also available.

“We know that cannabis can affect a person’s ability to drive, and that driving under the influence of cannabis can increase the risk of a crash by up to 300%,” said Professor Roche.

“Furthermore, driving skills can be negatively affected for up to five or more hours after using cannabis - and using cannabis and alcohol together, even at low doses, has an even larger negative effect on driving than using either alone.

“All of the available cannabis and alcohol-related datasets produced in Australia have been sourced in enhancing the Knowledgebase and as new data becomes available the information will be revised and updated to ensure that people have access to current and reliable information.”

NCETA continues to expand the Knowledgebase, and information about methamphetamine will be available soon.

The Knowledgebase can be accessed at <http://nadk.flinders.edu.au/> or on the NCETA home page at www.nceta.flinders.edu.au

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