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 Debra Lynch and Medical Cannabis Users of Australia founder Gail Hester. PHOTO: Richard Gosling

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Cannabis users say clinic is 'cash grab'

Judith Kerr, Quest Newspapers

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A NEW clinic which processes scripts for cannabis has been slammed as a cash grab by medicinal cannabis users in Logan, who say they

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depending on dosage and prescription.



 Debra Lynch and Medical Cannabis Users of Australia President Gail Hester say the clinic is overpriced . PHOTO: Richard Gosling

Medicinal Cannabis Users Association founder Gail Hester said association members from Logan said the \$300 initial consultation cost was prohibitive and so was the cannabis.

“These clinics are asking outrageous prices and putting medicinal cannabis way out of the reach of the average medicinal cannabis user in Logan,” she said.

“They are asking money upfront and none of it gets rebated back through Medicare.

“It is actually a brilliant business plan getting legal doctors to write legal scripts for corporate products and using people’s GP to do the ground work and supply reports and history.

“This is a winner for the corporation and the shareholders at the patient’s expense and does nothing for vulnerable people on low incomes who are desperate for access.

MMJ PhytoTech is a cannabis investment company with a market capitalisation of around \$100 million and owns 34 per cent of Harvest One, a Canadian listed company focused on delivering high-quality innovative cannabis products.

Cornubia mum Deb Lynch, who needs medicinal cannabis for Scleroderma, a chronic hardening and tightening of the skin, said it was unfair.

“Any hope of getting the drug I need to stop my chronic pain has gone — there is no way I can afford this type of treatment,” she said.

“If I am being treated for a medical condition and making an appointment to go to a doctor at a clinic then I should be treated like all other Medicare patients.”

Cannabis Access Clinics medical director Sanjay Nijhawan said the costs for his service were similar to specialist medical services as they were niche, highly-regulated treatments, not covered by Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule.

However, he reiterated claims that the costs would drop as the treatment became more widespread and regulations streamlined.

“We recognise that paying any amount of money will be too much for some people, so patients need to make a personal decision about whether the benefits outweigh the costs,” he said.

“We have had many patients comment that the price is reasonable as compared to specialist medical services in Australia.”



 Patient Narina Carter says the clinic has helped her.

Patient Narina Carter, who has several incurable chronic illnesses and lives in Coffs Harbour, said the clinic helped get her supply of lifesaving cannabis via the phone so she did not have to leave home.

“Knowing that when I phone Cannabis Access Clinic I will be answered straight away and can speak with the same people every time has given me a sense of security I sorely needed,” she said.

“Although the medication itself is not subsidised yet and would unfortunately be beyond some people’s capability, luckily I could see the process becoming more streamlined.

“Hopefully, it will limit the number of unwell citizens using illegal and unreliable black market products.”

