

DEVELOPING STORY

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GETTING HER LIFE BACK: Narina Carter is feeling more like herself since using medicinal cannabis for chronic pain. Picture: Rachel Vercoe

'Incredible results': How medicinal cannabis saved this mum



by RACHEL VERCOE



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FROM suffering chronic pain and not being able to leave her bedroom for months on end, Narina Carter is a new woman thanks to the effects medicinal cannabis has had on her body.

"I know a lot of people are on this illegally and it makes you feel like a criminal," Narina said.

"I think it's really important for people to know it is out there and they do have this option."

Coffs Harbour local 39-year-old Narina was born with collagen disease, a genetic issue affecting the connective tissue in the body.

For Narina, this has led to other issues including chronic pain.

"I've had a very big life and had issues for a very long time but always struggled on," she said.

Earlier this year, her pain and symptoms continued to worsen until she could no longer work or drive; she became bed bound.

Narina applied through the Cannabis Access Clinic which is a medical clinic helping patients with chronic conditions who may benefit from medicinal cannabis.

"It was a really good process, happened really quickly and they made it possible for me not to have to travel.

"All up it was just over \$400, which included the doctor's interview, application and everything else which realistically is really cheap compared to specialists who didn't know what to do and were referring me on."

A month after taking the medicinal cannabis oil, Narina is back on her feet and gaining her confidence back daily.

"I started getting incredible results. I went from not leaving home to going on a camping trip.

"I'm up, I'm doing housework, I've started doing a bit of craft for the local theatre again.

"Things that help me have a personality are back, my family and I are really grateful."

Although she still needs a walker and can't drive, Narina is thriving through her new lease on life and says she can almost feel herself getting better by the day.

"I know people in my condition in support groups who are on 20 different medications a day. To be able to have something that is a bit more natural and is a bit less prone for side effects is amazing."

Narina said she would continue to take medicinal cannabis for the rest of her life and was thankful for her GP, whose recommendation had given her a future.

"The issues I'm dealing with are incurable, I can do physio and live a good life but there's no treatments so I will take this forever."

Throughout her experience while applying, Narina said there were constant changes and she hoped Australia was rapidly changing its laws and that medicinal cannabis would become subsidised in the future.

"For me it's been quite an eye opener to be able to have this choice and know you can actually apply for this now."

Narina is currently creating props and costumes for the local theatre and is enjoying starting up a nail business.

"I'm a very driven person so this has given me something to work towards and have a future again rather than just a big empty void."

