



Home Office

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**Dr Owen Bowden-Jones**  
**Chair of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs**  
c/o Zahi Sulaiman  
Secretary to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD)  
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Sent by email to: [zahimhammad.sulaiman2@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:zahimhammad.sulaiman2@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

18 May 2018

Dear Owen

#### **LEGITIMATE USE OF CONTROLLED DRUGS: RESEARCH AND HEALTHCARE**

I am writing to you to provide you with an update on the Government's response to the ACMD's interim advice to facilitate legitimate research involving Schedule 1 drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001.

I am very grateful to the ACMD for all the work it has undertaken in providing this advice. I understand that this is a complex area and I am grateful for the collaborative approach that the Council has taken with my officials so far. I am aware that the Government's response establishing the preferred option was due on 22 March and I apologise for missing this deadline.

As you are aware, the research community wrote to the Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability on 12 February 2018 to raise their concerns about this issue and to seek a meeting, alongside the ACMD, to discuss a practical solution.

In principle, I agree with the ACMD's short-term recommendations. However, as you will be aware, the long-term solutions are more complex and I am concerned with the difficulties of implementing these both practically and legally.

Having considered the research community's letter, I believe a further meeting between officials, representatives from the research community, the Chief Scientific Advisers from the Home Office and the Department of Health and Social Care is necessary to discuss the feasibility of these options and ensure that we are able to find the right solution to the issues raised by your advice and the research

community's correspondence with the Home Office. The meeting will take place on 5 June and the outcome will inform my decision regarding your recommendations, both short and long-term.

I understand the importance of resolving this matter and I recognise that this overdue response has affected the ACMD's suggested proposal to provide further advice by April 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick Hurd". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**RT HON NICK HURD MP**