The Federal Government has blocked farmers from growing Australia's first trial crop of medicinal cannabis. Three Federal MPs are working on a Bill to legalise medical use of the drug in Australia and in Victoria Labor has promised to consider legislation if it wins the next election. Cannabis is used in the US to relieve symptoms of multiple sclerosis and help the side effects of cancer treatment. Dr David Allsop, University of Sydney joins the program to discuss the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes. He outlines the dangers of cannabis and speaks about University of Sydney studies on medicinal cannabis. Allsop says molecules in cannabis have antispasmodic properties and dampen the spasms associated with childhood epilepsy. Allsop mentions a spray being authorised in Australia by the TGA.

Interviewees
Dr David Allsop, University of Sydney

Also broadcast from the following 10 stations
ABC News 24 (Melbourne), ABC News 24 (Regional NSW), ABC News 24 (Brisbane), ABC News 24 (Adelaide), ABC News 24 (Perth), ABC News 24 (Regional Queensland), ABC News 24 (Hobart), ABC News 24 (Canberra), ABC News 24 (Regional Victoria), ABC News 24 (Regional West Australia)

Last week saw the Federal Government block farmers from growing Australia's first trial crop of medical cannabis. Three Federal MPs are working on a bill to legalise medical use of the drug in Australia. Interview with Dr David Allsop, Research fellow in psycho-pharmacology, University of Sydney. Allsop says there are a suite of known dangers with cannabis which includes dependence, psychosis and respiratory harm. Allsop says there are about 120 related molecules to the one that gets you high in cannabis that are non psycho-active. He says they all have very interesting medicinal properties and THC can actually stimulate the appetite in some patients. Allsop says they sampled about 250 samples of street cannabis from across NSW and tested the cannabinoid content. He says cannabis in NSW is very high in THC and is bred for the high with the medicinal benefit downgraded. Allsop says he is not an expert on childhood epilepsy but THC and Cannabidial have anti-spasmodic properties. Allsop says he is working on a spray called Sativex which is a 50-50 mixture of THC and Cannabidial. He says it is authorised in Australia for multiple sclerosis only.

Interviewees
Dr David Allsop, Research fellow in psycho-pharmacology, University of Sydney

Also broadcast from the following 7 stations