



Physician Information for Medical Marijuana

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1. What is the status of the medical marijuana bill in Pennsylvania?

Senate Bill 3 was signed into law as Act 16-2016 on April 17, 2016 and took effect on May 17, 2016,

2. Am I required to participate in the medical marijuana program?

No. Physicians are not required to certify any individual who seeks to obtain medical marijuana.

3. If I want to participate, what do I need to do?

To register with the Department of Health, physicians must provide information to the Department that they have training or experience to treat a serious medical condition by providing documentation to the Department of credentials, training or experience. The Department will determine the necessary levels for DOH certification.

Physicians also will be required to undergo a 4-hour training program regarding the latest scientific research on medical marijuana, including the risks and benefits of medical marijuana, and other information deemed necessary by the Department. This training program may count as continuing education credits as determined by the State Board of Medicine and State Board of Osteopathic Medicine.

4. Does that mean I can start recommending medical marijuana to my patients starting immediately?

No. It is estimated that it will take about 18 months for the program to be implemented. When the program is fully implemented, PAMED will notify its members.

5. Are there other limitations on my ability to certify patients for medical marijuana?

The Department of Health will monitor, with assistance from the Department of State, that a physician has a valid, unexpired, unrevoked, and unsuspended Pennsylvania license to practice medicine and whether the physician has been subject to discipline.

The inclusion of a physician in the registry is subject to annual review by the Department of Health to determine if the physician's license is no longer valid, has expired or been revoked or the physician has been subject to discipline. If the license is no longer valid, the department shall remove the physician from the registry until the physician holds a valid, unexpired, unrevoked, unsuspended Pennsylvania license to practice medicine.

6. Who is eligible to obtain medical marijuana?

An individual must have one of 17 specific serious medical conditions as diagnosed by a Department of Health registered physician: Cancer, Positive status for HIV or AIDS; Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis; Parkinson's Disease; Multiple Sclerosis; Damage to the nervous tissue of the spinal cord with objective neurological indication of intractable spasticity; Epilepsy; Inflammatory Bowel Disease; Neuropathies; Huntington's Disease; Crohn's Disease; PTSD; Intractable seizures; Glaucoma; Sickle Cell Anemia; Severe chronic or intractable pain of neuropathic origin or severe chronic or intractable pain in which conventional therapeutic intervention and opiate therapy is contraindicated or ineffective; or Autism.

7. If I certify someone for medical marijuana, can I place a time limit on this certification?

Yes. If, in the practitioner's professional opinion, the patient would benefit from medical marijuana only until a specified date, the practitioner may place such a time limit.

8. Can I certify a minor for medical marijuana?

Yes. If a patient is under 18 years of age, the patient must have a designated caregiver, such as a parent or legal guardian, an individual designated by a parent or legal guardian, or an appropriate individual approved by the Department of Health.

9. Are there prohibitions for physicians under this law?

A practitioner may not do the following:

1. A practitioner may not accept, solicit or offer any form of remuneration from or to a prospective patient, patient, prospective caregiver, caregiver or medical marijuana organization, including an employee, financial backer or principal, to certify a patient, other than accepting a fee for service with respect to the examination of the prospective patient to determine if the prospective patient should be issued a certification to use medical marijuana.
2. A practitioner may not hold a direct or economic interest in a medical marijuana organization.
3. A practitioner may not advertise the practitioner's services as a practitioner who can certify a patient to receive medical marijuana.

10. Will physicians be publicly listed as certified medical marijuana providers?

The names, business addresses and medical credentials of practitioners authorized to provide certifications to patients to enable them to obtain and use medical marijuana in the Commonwealth will be publicly available. All other practitioner information will be confidential.

11. If my patients obtain medical marijuana, will their names be placed in a database?

Yes. The Department of Health will maintain a database of patients and caregivers approved to use or assist in the administration of medical marijuana.

Further information for physicians can be found in [this PAMED Quick Consult](#) that reviews the Department of Health's temporary regulations for physicians that were published on June 3, 2017.