

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD

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State to Hold Hearing to Consider Adding Conditions to Medical Cannabis Program

(Santa Fe) – The New Mexico Department of Health’s Medical Advisory Board will hold a public hearing from 10 to 12 p.m. December 11 in the auditorum of the Harold Runnels Building, 1190 St. Francis Drive, in Santa Fe. The Board’s eight board-certified physicians will consider petitions to add new health conditions to the Department’s Medical Cannabis Program. The Board will review five petitions that have been previously submitted to the Department of Health.

The Board will make recommendations to the Department’s Health Secretary, who will make the final decision on all petitions. If a condition is approved, anyone with that medical condition can apply to the Medical Cannabis Program.

The Medical Advisory Board will review five petitions for the following conditions: Hepatitis C undergoing non-antiviral treatment, cluster headaches, Ankylosing Spondylitis, Bipolar Disorder and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (in a single petition), and Blepharospasm, a neurological movement disorder that causes an abnormal contraction or twitch of the eyelid. Ankylosing Spondylitis is a chronic, inflammatory arthritis and auto-immune disease.

Previously, the Health Secretary has added eight medical conditions based on recommendations from the Medical Advisory Board, a review of scientific literature that shows the conditions could be helped by medical cannabis and the purpose of the Lynn and Erin Compassionate Use Act to provide relief from pain and suffering associated with debilitating medical conditions.

To qualify for medical marijuana, a patient’s medical provider must certify that the patient has one of the eligible medical conditions, the condition is debilitating and that the benefit of medical marijuana would outweigh the potential risks.

Current qualifying conditions are: cancer, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, damage to the nervous tissue of the spinal cord with intractable spasticity, epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, painful peripheral neuropathy, intractable nausea/vomiting, severe anorexia/cachexia, hepatitis C infection currently receiving antiviral treatment, Crohn’s disease, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, chronic pain and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig’s disease). Hospice patients may also be eligible. Patients with chronic pain must have two doctor referrals and proof of their pain such as, X-rays or MRIs.

There are 889 active patients in the Medical Cannabis program. The Department has also approved five nonprofits to produce medical marijuana for patients and 243 patients to produce for themselves.

To apply for the Medical Cannabis program, look up <http://www.nmhealth.org/marijuana.html>.

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