

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD

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**Secretary of Health Approves Four New Non-Profit Medical Cannabis Producers**  
*New Mexico Now Has Five Licensed Non-Profit Producers*

(Las Cruces) – The New Mexico Department of Health announced today that four additional non-profit medical cannabis producers have been licensed and can begin producing medical cannabis immediately. There are now five non-profit producers in New Mexico licensed to produce medical cannabis.

Dr. Alfredo Vigil, secretary of the Department of Health, said the additional non-profit producers were approved based on the needs of patients. Twenty-one non-profit producer applications are currently pending with the Department of Health. Dr. Vigil said no non-profit producer applications have been rejected and the department will continue to evaluate the need for additional producers based on patient need and public safety.

“We are the first state to develop this kind of distribution system for medical cannabis and we will continue to proceed carefully with the development of the program so we can meet the needs of our patients while not creating an excess supply,” Dr. Vigil said. “Our main goals are to ensure our patients have access to the medicine they need while building a sustainable program for New Mexico. The medical cannabis program is for people who cannot get relief from their suffering from any other means. We are very proud of the program’s success so far.”

Governor Bill Richardson signed the Lynn and Erin Compassionate Use Act in 2007 that allows patients with qualifying conditions to use medical cannabis. The law also allowed New Mexico to develop a production and distribution system for medical cannabis patients.

The State’s first non-profit producer was approved in March 2009. Based on the amount of medical cannabis each producer can supply to patients, the Department of Health estimates that each non-profit producer will be able to supply medical cannabis to approximately 100 patients. Patients are allowed to possess six ounces of medical cannabis. Non-profit producers are allowed to have 95 mature plants and seedlings and have an inventory of usable medical cannabis for patients.

The Department of Health will notify patients about how to contact each non-profit producer to obtain a supply of medical cannabis. The current regulations that govern the Department of Health’s Medical Cannabis Program require that the names and locations of the non-profit producers be kept confidential to ensure the safety of patients, producers and the public.

Patients can also apply to produce their own supply of medical cannabis and are allowed to have four mature plants and 12 seedlings. There are 755 active medical cannabis patients and 204 are licensed to produce their own supply of medical cannabis. The Department of Health has approved 809 patients to use medical cannabis since the program began in 2007. Patients must reapply to the program each year. Eight patients have died and 46 chose not to renew their license.

To be approved for the medical cannabis program, patients must have a physician certify that they have one of the 15 qualifying conditions that is debilitating and can not be helped by standard treatments. The qualifying conditions are severe chronic pain, painful peripheral neuropathy, intractable nausea/vomiting, severe anorexia/cachexia, hepatitis C infection currently receiving antiviral treatment, Crohn's disease, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), cancer, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, damage to the nervous tissue of the spinal cord with intractable spasticity, epilepsy, HIV/AIDS and hospice patients.

Patients interested in more information about the Department of Health's Medical Cannabis Program can go online to [www.health.state.nm.us/idb/medical\\_cannabis.shtml](http://www.health.state.nm.us/idb/medical_cannabis.shtml) or call 505-827-2321.

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