

# **Medical Cannabis Advisory Board Meeting Minutes\***

December 6, 2022

## **I. Introductory Remarks and Call to Order (1:38)**

Stephanie Richmond PA-C called to order the regular meeting of the Medical Cannabis Advisory Board (MCAB) at 9:04 a.m. on December 6, 2022, using a WebEx Events Platform. General Instructions were given to panelists and attendees.

## **II. Roll Call (2:28)**

Stephanie Richmond conducted a roll call. The following persons were present:

Ariele Bauers	<u>present</u>
Mordechai Bronner	(absent)
Jean-Paul Dedam	(absent)
Rachel Goodman	(absent)
Cynthia Griebler	<u>present</u>
Courtney Marquez	<u>present</u>
Allen Plymale	<u>present</u>
Stephanie Richmond	<u>present</u>
Traci White	<u>present</u>

(Six of nine Medical Cannabis Advisory Board Members were present at this time, so quorum was met, and the meeting started. (9:38))

### **III. Introduction of New Board Members/Farewell to Past Members (9:54)**

### **IV. Approval of minutes (10:18)**

Stephanie Richmond made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. This motion was seconded by Cynthia Griebler.

### **V. Medical Cannabis Program (MCP) Update**

#### Patient Services Information: (10:40)

Dr. Dominick Zurlo presented statistics report from the end of October. He acknowledged that the number of actively enrolled patients. This trend was anticipated and after leveling off, we expect it to rise in the future. List of qualifying conditions unchanged. Enrolment by county also unchanged. A new map showing the percentage of patients as compared to overall patient enroll per county. Demographics also reviewed specifically highlighting the consistency of patient enrollment across age ranges. Five-year enrollment trends also reviewed. Upon concluding his slide presentation, Dr. Zurlo made himself available for questions and showed meeting participants where the statistics and educational materials could be located. Update on the status of the digital medical cannabis card.

Ariele Bauers made a comment about her concerns over the perceived increase in cost for medical cannabis that her patients are facing.

Dominick Zurlo mentioned that any regulations with regard to price would lie with the Cannabis Control Division. For its part the MCP would include additional questions about price in its upcoming CPPC Survey.

#### Final Decision Regarding Petition for Anxiety Disorder: (27:04)

Dr. Gary French read the official decision rendered by Secretary Scrase with regards to adding Anxiety Disorder to the list of Qualifying medical conditions. Dr. Scrase did adopt the recommendation of the MCAB to add Anxiety Disorder to the list of qualifying conditions. The decision will go into effect January 1, 2023.

Additionally, Dr. Scrase recommended that the MCAB develop informative materials to help ensure safe use.

Dominick Zurlo added that with the inclusion of Anxiety Disorder, other conditions like PTSD may drop in number.

Gary French updated the Board about the Cannabis NOW Forum being held for medical providers who certify patients for the Medical Cannabis Program

## **VI. Discussion of Petitions (34:00)**

Stephanie Richmond opened the floor to MCAB Members inviting them to discuss potential future petitions and what role Board Member would play in submitting and hearing petitions. This motion was seconded by Ariel Bauers.

Stephanie added that in addition to insomnia, upon reviewing conditions from other states, that chronic pancreatitis, migraines, or sickle cell disease could potentially be included in the list of conditions.

Ariele Bauers felt that most of these conditions are already represented by the severe chronic pain diagnosis and that adding more “specific” diagnosis may require a more detailed approach with more precise research information. Additionally, by adding more specific diagnoses, many patients may more readily identify with the condition and be more likely to consider medical cannabis as a therapy tool.

Stephanie Richmond agreed that patients may be more ready to participate in the Medical Cannabis Program if they saw their specific conditions listed as opposed to a broad category.

Ariele Bauers added that given this possibility, that considering insomnia as a potential qualifying condition would make sense.

Allen Plymale also suggested that due to the deleterious effects of sleep deprivation, that looking at insomnia as a potential qualifying condition would really make sense.

Cindy Griebler raised the question about reviewing case studies and collaborating with UNM in order to create some resources that could provide patients with guidance on how to manage and dose their qualifying conditions rather than just by trial and error.

Additional conversation over how to help patients with limited options access cannabis through some type of foundation was had.

Many growers in other states have shown interest in donating cannabis to help those with limited access, but given the constraints of interstate transport, this may not be a viable option.

Allen Plymale added that currently the College of Pharmacy was attempting to educate pharmacists with regards to cannabis so that they (the pharmacists) would be aware of potential drug interactions. This information could be shared with patients.

A review of the “scope/role” of the Medical Cannabis Advisory Board discussed.

Ariele Bauers offered to help create a “best use” document for cannabis that could be shared with patients.

Ariele also offered her concerns over the price of cannabis her patient must pay. “If Department of Health is unable to control prices, who can help?”

Role of Cannabis Control Division discussed.

Cindy Griebler raised the question about perhaps having “best use” documents for all qualifying conditions and not just Anxiety Disorder.

## **VII. Public Comments (58:07)**

Kristina Caffrey – Ms. Caffrey shared with the MCAB information about ongoing litigation by which a half dozen medical cannabis patients were suing insurers and Medicaid in order to have the costs of medical cannabis paid for by insurers. For more information one can look at the state lawsuit under the following entry - D202CV2022-03237 and for the federal case - 1:22CV00546.

Attendees were again invited to send in public comments in writing the Medical Cannabis Program’s general email address.

## **VIII. Set date for next Medical Cannabis Advisory Board Meeting (1:03:56)**

Stephanie Richmond canvassed the Board members and made a motion to hold the next MCAB Meeting on March 7, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 pm. This motion was seconded by Cindy Griebler.

## **IX. Adjournment (1:05:09)**

Stephanie Richmond PA-C adjourned the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

Minutes submitted by: Gary J. French, MD/ Medical Director NMDOH MCP

**\*(Please note that an audiovisual recording of the meeting in its entirety is available for viewing and can be found on the Medical Cannabis Program Webpage. These minutes are a short summary of the meeting's events and serve to highlight key features of the meeting.)**