

Medical Marijuana - Background

Self-Learning Module

PURPOSE

This Standing Order Self-Learning Module has been developed to serve as a template for EMS provider training. The intent is to provide consistent and concise information to all providers practicing within the SAEMS Region. The content of the Module has been reviewed by the Protocol Development and Review Sub-Committee, and, where applicable, includes the specific standing order, resource and reference material, and instructions for completing the Self-Learning Module to obtain continuing education credit. One hour of SAEMS continuing education credit may be issued following successful completion of the module.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this learning module, the participant will be able to:

1. List the approved indications for medical marijuana in the State of Arizona
2. List the approved providers who can certify that a patient meets criteria to obtain medical marijuana.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Review the accompanying information, and any additional reference material as necessary.
2. Complete the attached posttest and return it to your supervisor or base hospital manager for continuing education credit.

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INTRODUCTION

The Arizona Medical Marijuana Act was approved by Arizona voters in November 2010 after the passage of proposition 203. This proposition required the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to create a medical marijuana program. The Arizona Medical Marijuana Program (AMMP) went into effect on April 14, 2011. The sale, manufacture, distribution, use, possession, etc., of marijuana remains illegal under federal law. A registry identification card or registration certificate issued by the Arizona Department of Health Services pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes Title 36, Chapter 28.1 and Arizona Administrative Code Title 9, Chapter 17 does not protect individuals from legal action by federal authorities, including possible criminal prosecution for violations of federal law.

It is likely that Pre-hospital providers will encounter patients who use medical marijuana or have it in their possession. The aim of this Self-Learning Module is to provide the pre-hospital providers at all levels with an overview of the AMMP. There are no specific prehospital protocols for the management of those who are using medical marijuana nor for the management of adverse reactions to medical marijuana, drug-drug interactions that involve medical marijuana, or unintentional exposures to medical marijuana.

Subsequent Self Learning Modules will cover the pharmacology and clinical effects of medical marijuana, potential adverse effects of medical marijuana, cannabis withdrawal, drug-drug interactions, and unintentional pediatric exposures.

WHO CAN USE MEDICAL MARIJUANA?

Qualifying patients (QP's) are those who have been provided written certification by a doctor of medicine (MD), doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO), naturopathic physician (NMD/ND) or homeopathic physician (HMD) as having a debilitating medical condition that has been approved by ADHS. Medical Marijuana is not prescribed by the physician, the role is to provide certification that the patient has an approved debilitating medical condition. As of this writing, NDs have certified the most patient's with over 87% of the total enrollment.

There are two types of QPs, "Adult Patients" and "Patients Under the Age of 18". Those who are under the age of 18 require two physician certifications designating a debilitating medical condition, and his or her parent or guardian must be designated as the patient's designated caregiver (CG).

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The CG provides consent for the use of medical marijuana buy the minor and controls its administration. Adult patients may also designate a CG.

Adult QPs and CGs must submit an application for and obtain a registry identification card issued by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Patient ID Card and Security Features



Color Bar Identifier

As of May 8, 2013, ADHS began printing ID cards with colored bar identifiers as follows:

Qualifying Patient – Yellow
Designated Caregiver – Red
Dispensary Agent – Blue

NOTE: Cards issued prior to May 8, 2013 will not have the color bar identifier.

Ultraviolet Security Image

Under a black light, the ADHS logo (without the copper sunburst) is revealed in the center of the card.

Clear Laminate Hologram

The words "Arizona Medical Marijuana Program" are printed across the card on three separate lines within the clear laminate—once across the top, middle, and bottom of the card.

Medical Marijuana Annual Report A.R.S. §36-2809 (2016 January 14)

APPROVED "Debilitating Medical Conditions"?

The following "debilitating medical conditions" are approved by the ADHS:

- Cancer
- Glaucoma
- HIV(+)
- AIDS
- Hepatitis C
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
- Crohn's disease

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- Agitation of Alzheimer's disease
- Post-traumatic stress disorder

Furthermore, QP's may be certified if they have a chronic or debilitating disease or medical condition causes, or if the treatment of such causes one or more of the following:

- Cachexia or wasting syndrome
- Severe and chronic pain
- Severe nausea
- Seizures
- Severe and persistent muscle spasms

Other debilitating medical conditions may be added in the future. To date, the most common qualifying condition reported is chronic pain.

WHERE IS MEDICAL MARIJUANA OBTAINED?

QPs may obtain medical marijuana from a registered nonprofit medical marijuana dispensary. These dispensaries undergo routine compliance inspections as well as complaint-based inspections.

QPs may be authorized to cultivate up to twelve marijuana plants within an enclosed, locked facility if a medical marijuana dispensary is not operating within 25 miles of the QPs address. Currently, 97.2% of Arizonans are within 25 miles of an operating dispensary.

The Executive Summary of the Third Annual Medical Marijuana Report A.R.S. 36-2809 provides background information and summarizes the current state of the AMMP.

In November 2010, Arizona voters passed a ballot initiative making Arizona the fourteenth state to adopt a medical marijuana law. As of June 30, 2015, 23 states and the District of Columbia have medical marijuana programs. Eleven have been by ballot initiatives similar to Arizona, and 12 have been through legislative action not requiring voter approval. Since the Arizona Medical Marijuana Program went into effect on April 14, 2011, the goal of ADHS has been to ensure the development and administration of the pre-eminent program in the country for medical use of marijuana.

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During state fiscal year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015:

- There were a total of 80,756 active cardholders, which included 77,639 qualifying patients, 705 caregivers, and 2,412 dispensary agents. Of the total qualifying patients, approximately 34% (n = 26,091) were female qualifying patients, and of the total caregivers, 33% (n = 233) were female caregivers.
- Approximately 2.4% (n = 1,864) of QPs and CGs were authorized to cultivate.
- The number of qualifying patients per 1,000 residents were highest in Yavapai County (20.6), followed by Gila County (18.5) and Coconino County (17.1). The following counties had the lowest number of qualifying patients per 1,000 residents: Yuma (4.5), Santa Cruz (5.7), and Graham (7.7) Counties
- The number of qualifying patients who are minors (i.e., <18 years of age) increased by 39% from 92 qualifying patients in 2014 state fiscal year to 128 qualifying patients in the current reporting period.
- In contrast to prior years, the majority of the qualifying patients (n = 46,896; ~60%) had two or more debilitating medical conditions. The remaining 40% reported one unique condition. Approximately 33% of the qualifying patients (n = 25,705) indicated "severe and chronic pain" as their only debilitating medical condition.
- Seven hundred fourteen physicians provided certifications to 77,639 patients during this time period. Twenty-five physicians certified approximately 63% of the patients.

Additional information about the AMMP can be found at:

- <http://www.azdhs.gov/medicalmarijuana/>
- <http://www.azmedmj.org/>
- The Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center or the Banner Poison and Drug Information Center which can be reached at 1-800-222-1222.

REFERENCES

1. Medical Marijuana Annual Report A.R.S. §36-2809 (2016 January 14), Arizona Department of Health Services. Retrieved from:
<http://azdhs.gov/documents/licensing/medical-marijuana/reports/2015/2015-mm-annual-report-160114.pdf>

POSTTEST

Please answer the following questions by marking the appropriate response:

1. All of the following may provide written certification that a patient has a “debilitating medical condition” that is approved by the Arizona Department of health Services **EXCEPT**.
 - a. Doctor of Medicine (MD)
 - b. Doctor of Osteopathy (DO)
 - c. Naturopathic Physician (NMD/ND)
 - d. Homeopathic Physician (MD(H)/DO(H))
 - e. Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)
2. True or False: A qualifying patient must be 18 years or older.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. All of the following are qualifying conditions for medical marijuana **EXCEPT**:
 - a. Hepatitis C
 - b. Acute pain
 - c. Nausea
 - d. Cachexia
 - e. All of the above
 - f. None of the above

Name _____ Date _____

EVALUATION

	Lowest Worst Least				Highest Best Most
1. To what extent did this module meet your needs?	1	2	3	4	5
2. There was a balance between theoretical and practical information.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The time required was appropriate to the content.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The module increased my knowledge and understanding of the topic.	1	2	3	4	5
5. References or audiovisuals were adequate.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Overall, this program was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Additional comments: _____
