

June 20th, 2017

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Internal Medicine Board Certified  
Medical Marijuana Specialist

PA Department of Health  
Office of Medical Marijuana  
Training Approval  
Room 628, Health and Welfare  
625 Forster Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

re: Physician Registration

Dear Members of the Pennsylvania Medical Marijuana Program:

Please consider my qualifications to be a physician that is registered to certify patients for medical marijuana in Pennsylvania.

I have practiced as a medical marijuana physician since 2015 in Delaware, where I treat hundreds of patients and supported the addition of terminal illness as a qualified condition<sup>1</sup>. I am in frequent contact with the DE MMJ Program, with whom I have a close relationship. More recently, I have been seeing Pennsylvania patients to discuss the possibility of marijuana use in the future<sup>2</sup>, carefully making sure to inform them of the pre-maturity of certifying them while awaiting official protocols.

I have spoken publicly at numerous medical gatherings to inform listeners about medical marijuana use and educate other doctors about integrating it with traditional healthcare practices, including as a substitute for prescription opioids<sup>3</sup>.

I've completed Continuing Medical Education both in-person at teaching seminars and through online educational materials. These educational training courses are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and the AMA, which ensures

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<sup>1</sup> <http://dhss.delaware.gov/dph/hsp/files/mmpetterminal.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fox29.com/news/217769358-story>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.pottsmmerc.com/article/MP/20170508/NEWS/170509749>

they have been approved by the state Pennsylvania State Medical Board for continuing education credits<sup>4</sup>. In total, there are 22.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits that have been completed and they encompass all requirements of physician training as written in the current temporary Physician Guidelines and Regulations<sup>5</sup>.

Topics covered in these CME courses:

- General information about medical marijuana under Federal and State law.
- The latest information on the endocannabinoid system and use of cannabis.
- Medical marijuana treatment for chronic pain (both cancer and non-cancer related), use in palliative care settings, and treatment of specific conditions.
- Dosing, forms of preparation, routes of administration, and best practices for specific serious medical diseases.
- Pharmacokinetic properties, risks including but not limited to medical marijuana's side effects, interactions with other drugs, use with opioids, potential development of addiction and misuse of marijuana.

Other requirements for the physician training include recommendations on obtaining informed consent from a patient [or caregiver]. I have had experience with this both in Delaware and in Pennsylvania, where I speak closely with parents of children that I signed Safe Harbor letters for. My continuing medical education activities have also covered this topic.

Finally, the training must educate doctors about the PA Prescription Monitoring Program. I am happy to inform the Department and MMJ Program that my experience using prescription monitoring programs in both Delaware and PA has caused me to create protocols for my PA patients that already incorporate the PA PDMP in their assessments. All Pennsylvania patients at my practice have been queried on the PA PDMP portal or documentation of the need to do so prior to any future recommendations for medical marijuana was written in their clinical notes. This was done as a ethical and moral standard of the clinic before recommendations were released in PA. Because of this, I feel that the state can feel secure in my competency to use the PA PDMP, like I already have. To underscore this point, holding licenses in both states has allowed me to query most patients in both PA and DE prescription drug portals, which are not linked and provide a window for prescription drug diversion.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ama-assn.org/sites/default/files/media-browser/public/physicians/cme/physician-faq.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol47/47-22/928.html>

As you can see from this letter and its supporting documents, my registration as a physician who can certify patients for medical marijuana is already supported through extensive accredited continuing medical education as well as career experience. Since I have been declining patient visits while I await this credentialing, I feel that many patients could already be receiving the consultation they need from my bona fide patient-physician relationship.

*Please grant me permission to begin caring for my current and future Pennsylvania patients as a State-approved medical marijuana doctor.*

Sincerely,

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