

Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection

Medical Marijuana Program

Board of Physicians

Minutes

September 11, 2013

<u>Members Present:</u>	William M. Rubenstein Dr. Jonathan Kost Dr. Robert Siegel Dr. Deepak Cyril D'Souza Dr. David Greco	Commissioner (Skype)
<u>DCP Staff Present:</u>	Claudette Carveth Xaviel Soto Peter Krzykowski	Director of Communications Health Program Associate Health Program Assistant

Call to Order

Commissioner Rubenstein called the meeting to order of the Board of Physicians for Connecticut's Medical Marijuana Program at 8:40 A.M. at the Department of Consumer Protection, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Room 126.

Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

On a motion made by Commissioner Rubenstein and unanimously voted, the draft minutes of the May 08, 2013 are accepted.

Report on Approved Regulations

Commissioner Rubenstein explained the process the Department went through to get the regulations approved to the Board of Physicians. He also mentioned the Department released the Medical Marijuana Producers and Dispensary facility Request for Applications (RFAs) on September 6, 2013. Licenses for medical marijuana producers and dispensary facilities are expected to be awarded near the beginning of 2014. Production facilities and dispensary facilities should be up and running by spring or early summer.

Commissioner reminded the Board that the state is on its own when it comes to figuring out certain details governing the use of marijuana as a medication. For instance: How will patients be informed about the possible side effects of marijuana use and whether it has contradictions with other medications? How will the state collect data on those effects?

All prescription medications receive approval from the FDA, but because marijuana is not federally approved for medicinal use, there are no FDA-approved studies of its effects.

Dr. Jonathan Kost suggested that physicians in the state receive special training on the effects of marijuana. He compared it to the training required of doctors before they can prescribe Suboxone.

Dr. Deepak Cyril D'Souza suggested that packages of marijuana come with information gleaned from the use of Marinol. Treating patients with marijuana is not the usual practice for physicians, and he is concerned and uncomfortable about how much physicians know about marijuana."

Commissioner agreed that physicians could consider Marinol's effects when deciding whether to certify a patient for marijuana, but the regulations don't require them to do so. Marijuana should be treated the same as most other medications, instead of placing it in a special category.

DOJ Update

Commissioner Rubenstein briefly discussed the guidelines released by the Department of Justice on August 29, 2013 for federal prosecutors in states that have enacted laws authorizing the use of marijuana for medical purposes. The guidance made one overarching point clear: the Department of Justice expects that states and local governments that have enacted laws authoring marijuana-related conduct will implement effective regulatory and enforcement systems to protect federal priorities and the health and safety of every citizen. It must also include strong enforcement efforts, backed by adequate funding.

Review Petition Process

Board members were asked to familiarize themselves with the Sec. 21a-408-12 of the regulations as the Department is anticipating patient petitions in the near future.

Discussion of Other Responsibilities

Commissioner Rubenstein asked the board members to think of what kind of data such studies should focus on and to come back with suggestions when the board meets again next February 2014.

Commissioner also added that out of the 20 states in the U.S. that have medical marijuana programs, Connecticut is in the best position to collect useful data. This is because of the rigorous testing requirements of all marijuana products and the requirement that each marijuana product be labeled with information about its chemical make-up.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Rubenstein adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:45 A.M.

Next Meeting:

Scheduled for Wednesday, January 14, 2015 at 8:30 A.M., room 126.