

Minutes

Medical Cannabidiol Board Meeting

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2024 - 10:00 AM

1. Call to Order

Mike McKelvey, Chair

The November 8, 2024, Iowa Medical Cannabidiol Board meeting was called to order at 10:03 by Cpt. McKelvey.

2. Roll Call

Mike McKelvey, Chair

Board Members Present	Not Present
Cpt. Mike McKelvey - Law Enforcement	Dr. Andrea Weber - Psychiatry
Dr. Stephen Richards – Family Medicine	Dr. Mohamad Mokadem - Gastroenterology
Dr. Robert Shreck - Oncology	Pediatrics (Vacant)
Dr. Corey Garvin - Pharmacy	Pain Management (Vacant)
	Neurology (Vacant)

Bureau of Cannabis Regulation staff members Owen Parker, Andrea Hoyt, and Bobby Barcelo facilitated the meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mike McKelvey, Chair

Dr. Shreck motioned to approve the minutes from the August 23, 2024, Board meeting, seconded by Dr. Garvin. The motion was carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment Period

Mike McKelvey, Chair

- **Carl Olsen:** Carl stated that Nebraska authorized medical cannabis, making it the 48th state to offer “federal racketeering.” He noted that the DEA has not responded to Iowa’s request for a federal exemption submitted in April of 2021. Carl thanked the board and staff for the effort to seek a federal exemption for the medical cannabis program.

- **Jeffrey Jones:** Jeffrey thanked Carl for his words. He expressed appreciation for Iowa is taking medical cannabis seriously. He questioned if more licenses were permitted, would protections be in place to ensure the current two companies would not expand. Owen explained that licensing would likely be determined by the legislature.
- **Earl Ramey:** Earl thanked the board for their work. He explained that Iowa is one of the cleanest states regarding consumable hemp after implementing HF2605 in 2024. He noted Iowa does still provide “recreational THC” through that program. He shared anecdotes about his preference for the natural plant over synthetic or refined products. He shared his desire for patients to have access to the raw plant material.
- **Lucas Nelson:** Lucas is the group president for Bud & Mary’s. He thanked Dr. Shreck for coming to visit the manufacturer and requested other board members visit their facilities as well. He stated that Nebraska will join nearby states that will provide more comprehensive options for patients. He challenged that Iowa’s program was intended to remain limited, and doing so makes the program less accessible financially and geographically. He shared that patients have more options with the consumable hemp program than through the medical cannabis program. He encouraged more engagement with the people the program is trying to serve.
- **Tyson Allchin:** Tyson asked when the state did away with human consumption as a quality standard for hemp, as the current standards have been lowered. He questioned if the medical program is having decreased quality like the consumable hemp program. He also urged the board to open a pathway for small contract farmers to be able to grow for the medical program.
- **Frank Carmenate** had requested to comment but was not available.

5. Introduction of New Board Member

Owen Parker

Owen introduced Dr. Corey Garvin, the owner of Wester Drug in Muscatine, as the newest board member. Dr. Garvin shared he is an Iowa native. He focuses on patient care and optimizing outcomes. He noticed that patients were turning to more homeopathic and natural pathways but were taking these products without healthcare supervision.

6. Program Updates

Owen Parker

- The program continues to see new practitioners certify their first patient. In the last 5 years, the program has seen an average of 341 new practitioners per year.
- The total number of active patients have remained level for the past 18 months.
- The Bureau of Cannabis Regulation continues to process approximately 1,500 applications per month, and the renewal metrics are around 50%.
- Since implementation of the waiver program in 2020, the percentage of patients with THC waivers has increased slightly year over year. Around 1 out of 5 patients have THC waivers.
- The average monthly dispensary sales for 2023 were \$1,076,415. The average monthly dispensary sales for 2024 were \$1,134,541.
- Vaporizable forms remain the patient preferred form. The data for other forms (gummies, etc.) can't accurately be accounted for, as they may be captured in the consumable hemp program.

7. Provider Education Subcommittee

Andrea Hoyt

The subcommittee was able to create a provider education handout, which has been posted on HHS's website. The patient education sheet has been updated and hosted on the program's website.

8. 2024 Annual Report Recommendations

Owen Parker

The recommendations for the annual report presented by Owen were as follows:

- Changing the statute name to medical cannabis
- Increased dispensaries
- Removing sales tax from patient purchases at the dispensaries
- Inclusion of midlevel providers (ARNP/PA) on the board
- Tax status for licensee equality with traditional business
- Provide a mechanism for certifying practitioners to receive patient purchasing data upon request to the department
- Improvements in patient provider relationships and oversight of telehealth consultation
- Seek a federal exemption for Iowa's program

Dr. Shreck mentioned that on UT's program, at least one in-person visit is required to be certified by telehealth and that their program is more provider-lead.

Dr. Shreck inquired how they could ensure the Board's recommendations are seen by legislature and mentioned how the recommendations are non-partisan. Owen responded that HHS submits the reports, then answers questions as they arise. Dr. Shreck inquired about the Board's ability to lobby

Dr. Shreck inquired about the exemption filed by the Department in 2021, and Owen explained it's the hands of congress and HHS has done what it can on the matter.

Dr. Garvin shared that the PDMP does not have cannabis on it, and pain providers question liability regarding this. Dr. Garvin shared that not being able to use HSA card for medical cannabis is a hurdle for patients.

Dr. Richards moved to approve the annual report recommendations as a whole, and Dr. Shreck seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Board Vacancies

Owen Parker

Nick Crawford from the HHS Government Relations team and Owen will follow up with the Governor's office regarding the vacancies. It was noted that there was an applicant for the pediatric provider seat on the board.

10. Future Meetings

Mike McKelvey, Chair

Future Medical Cannabidiol Board meetings will be held in 2025 on the following dates (below).:

1. TBD

The public will be made aware of whether these meetings will be virtual and if there are any changes to this schedule.

11. Adjourn

Mike McKelvey, Chair

A motion was made by Dr. Shreck and seconded by Dr. Garvin to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. This meeting is officially adjourned at 11:19 am.



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