

Medical Cannabis Program Update

APRIL 2016

Minnesota's medical cannabis program began distributing medical cannabis to registered patients on July 1, 2015. This update reports on the time period from July 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016. The data for this update, unless otherwise noted, come from the medical cannabis patient registry system, a secure, web-based application system, and is updated quarterly.

Cannabis Manufacturers

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) registered two medical cannabis manufacturers on December 1, 2014. They are responsible for the cultivation, production, and distribution of medical cannabis in the state. The manufacturers are Minnesota Medical Solutions, LLC and LeafLine Labs, LLC.

Minnesota Medical Solutions opened its Minneapolis distribution facility on July 1, 2015. Its Rochester distribution facility opened on July 23, 2015. It is scheduled to open additional distribution facilities in the west metro and Moorhead by July 1, 2016.

LeafLine Labs opened its Eagan distribution facility on July 1, 2015. It is scheduled to open additional distribution facilities in Hibbing, St. Cloud, and St. Paul by July 1, 2016.

Figure 1 displays the number of medical cannabis dispensing transactions completed in Minnesota between July 1, 2015 and March 31, 2016. Each transaction represents the purchase of a medical cannabis product for an individual patient; the quantity and number of products dispensed per patient per month varies.

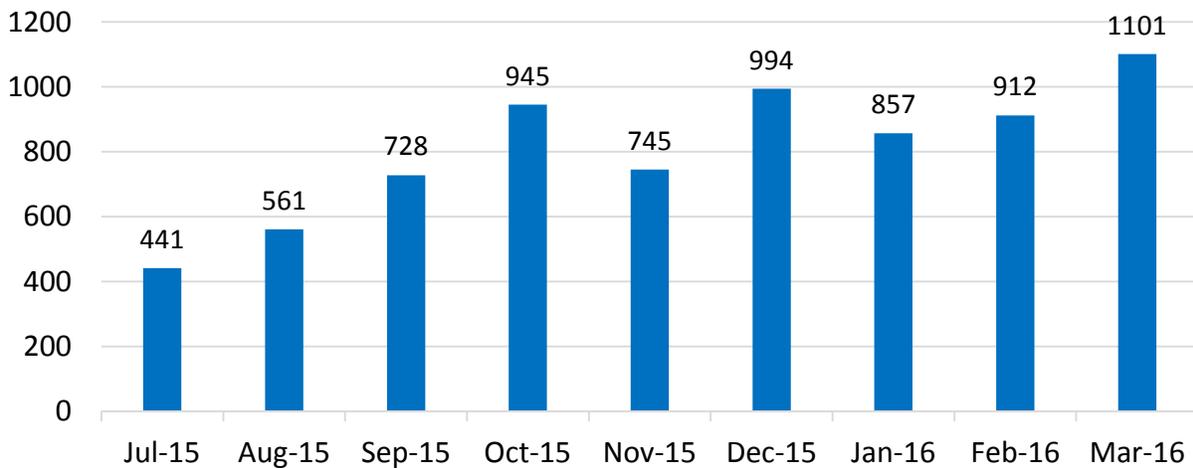


Figure 1. Total number of medical cannabis dispensing transactions by month since the program start.

Patients

Qualifying patients must be enrolled in the medical cannabis patient registry to be eligible to legally purchase and possess medical cannabis. As part of the application process, a patient’s qualifying medical condition must be certified by a health care practitioner; this qualifying medical condition and the patient must be re-evaluated and re-certified by a health care practitioner every year.

Figure 2 displays the monthly number of patients actively enrolled in the registry. As of March 31, 2016, there are 1190 patients actively enrolled in the patient registry. The patient count is steadily increasing.

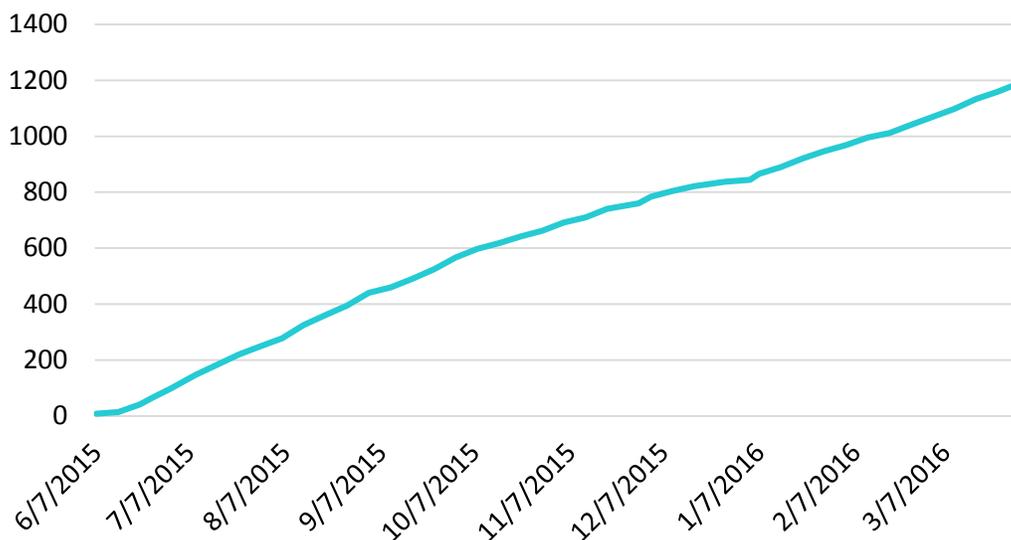


Figure 2. Number of patients active in registry since the program start.

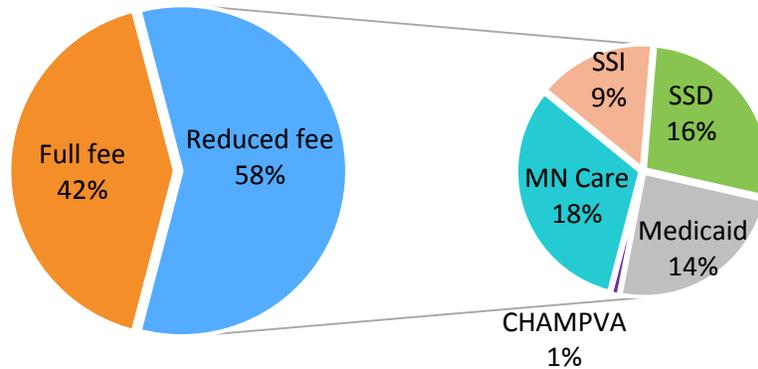


Figure 3. Breakdown of active patients by fee type (reduced vs. full fee) and types of government assistance for reduced fees.

Patients must pay an enrollment fee before they are eligible to legally purchase and possess medical cannabis. Minnesota Statutes section 152.35 requires patients to pay a fee of \$200 to enroll in the program. Patients who receive government assistance (MN Care, Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid/MA and CHAMPVA) qualify for a reduced fee of \$50. Figure 3 shows that approximately 58 percent of registered patients to date have qualified for the reduced enrollment fee.

The racial/ethnic distribution of active patients in the registry reflects the state’s demographics, as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Active Patient Race and Ethnicity Compared to Overall State Demographics

Race/Ethnicity	Medical Cannabis Registry	2014 Census Bureau Estimates*
American Indian	29 (2.4%)	1.9%
Asian	17 (1.4%)	5.0%
Black	69 (5.8%)	6.5%
Hawaiian	2 (0.2%)	0.1%
White	1019 (86.0%)	87.5%
Hispanic	30 (2.5%)	4.9%
Other	18 (1.5%)	1.7%
Unknown	6 (0.2%)	

*<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

The qualifying medical conditions are: Cancer or its treatment (must be accompanied by severe or chronic pain, nausea, or severe wasting); Glaucoma; HIV/AIDS; Tourette Syndrome; Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig’s Disease); Seizures, including those characteristic of epilepsy; Severe and persistent muscle spasms, including those characteristic of multiple sclerosis; Crohn’s Disease; and Terminal Illness with life-expectancy of less than 1 year (must be accompanied by severe or chronic pain, nausea, or severe wasting). Intractable Pain was prospectively added to the list by MDH, effective August 1, 2016.

Table 2 shows the number of active patients in the patient registry who have been certified as having that qualifying medical condition. The three most frequently certified qualifying conditions are (1) severe and persistent muscle spasms, including those characteristic of multiple sclerosis, (2) cancer or its treatment, and (3) seizures, including those characteristic of epilepsy.

Qualifying Condition	Patients: N (%)
Glaucoma	14 (1%)
HIV/AIDS	40 (3%)
Tourette Syndrome	21 (2%)
ALS	18 (2%)
Seizures	272 (23%)
Muscle Spasms	515 (43%)
Crohn's Disease	83 (7%)
Cancer	291 (24%)
Terminal Illness	57 (5%)

*Count may be included more than once if patients have been certified with multiple qualifying conditions.

Figure 4 displays the number of active patients by age and gender. The average age of registered patients is 42.8 ± 19.1 years, however the average age varies by qualifying medical condition.

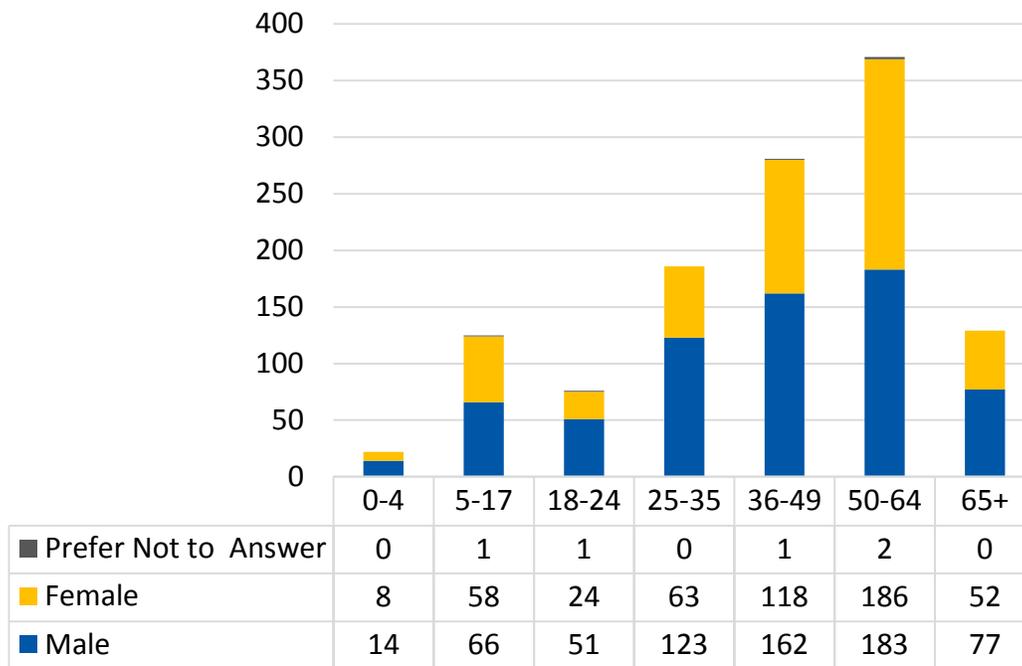


Figure 4. Breakdown of active patients by age and gender.

Table 3 demonstrates the breakdown of active, condition-specific patient counts by age. Patients certified as having seizure disorders have the lowest average age: 23.1 ± 16.2 years; patients with ALS have the highest average age: 60.8 ± 9.8 years.

Age (y)	Glaucoma	HIV/AIDS	Tourette Syndrome	ALS	Seizures	Muscle Spasms	Crohn's Disease	Cancer	Terminal Illness
0-4	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20 (7%)	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)
5-17	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	8 (38%)	0 (0%)	102 (38%)	3 (1%)	0 (0%)	11 (4%)	4 (7%)
18-24	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	36 (13%)	25 (5%)	5 (6%)	9 (3%)	4 (7%)
25-35	1 (7%)	6 (15%)	7 (33%)	0 (0%)	53 (19%)	90 (17%)	25 (30%)	21 (7%)	5 (9%)
36-49	1 (7%)	13 (33%)	3 (14%)	2 (11%)	41 (15%)	149 (29%)	31 (37%)	58 (20%)	13 (23%)
50-64	7 (50%)	19 (48%)	1 (5%)	9 (50%)	16 (6%)	197 (38%)	17 (20%)	126 (43%)	23 (40%)
65+	5 (36%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	7 (39%)	4 (1%)	49 (10%)	5 (6%)	65 (22%)	8 (14%)

*Count of patients may be included more than once if patients have been certified with multiple conditions.

Figure 5 provides a graphic representation of how far registered patients travel to visit a cannabis patient center (CPC) to access medical cannabis. The graph represents the one-way distance between the patient’s home address and the nearest open CPC.

Registered patients live an average of 46 miles (range: 1-389 miles) from the nearest open CPC. Because only three of the eight permitted CPCs have opened, the distance patients must travel to visit a CPC varies greatly.

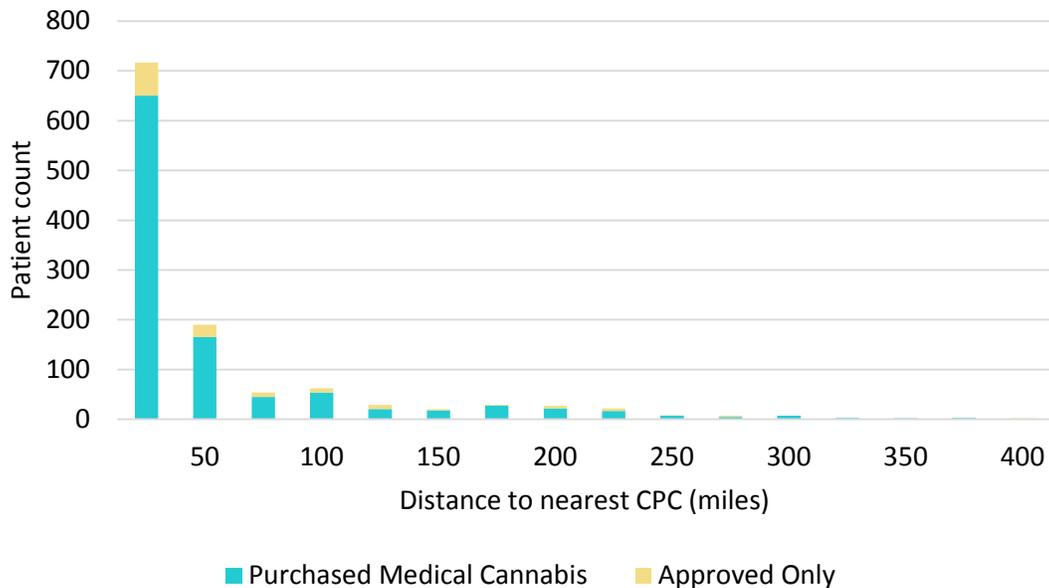


Figure 5. Distribution of all patients' distance from home to nearest CPC, with distinction between patients who are approved but have not purchased medical cannabis at a CPC and patients who have made at least one medical cannabis purchase.

Caregivers

There are two different groups of caregivers in the Minnesota medical cannabis program: designated caregivers and parents or legal guardians acting as caregivers. All caregivers must be enrolled in the patient registry system. A patient’s parent or legal guardian may act as caregiver and be entered in the registry without having to qualify as a designated caregiver. A patient may have both registered designated caregivers and registered parents or legal guardians acting as caregivers.

The law permits patient to have a registered designated caregiver if the patient’s health care practitioner certifies that the patient suffers from a developmental or physical disability that prevents the patient from either self-administering the medication or acquiring the medication from a distribution facility. Registered designated caregivers must pass a criminal background check.

Table 4 displays the number of active designated caregivers by condition.

Qualifying Condition	Caregivers: N (%)
Glaucoma	3 (2%)
HIV/AIDS	1 (1%)
Tourette Syndrome	1 (1%)
ALS	12 (9%)
Seizures	30 (21%)
Muscle Spasms	46 (33%)
Crohn's Disease	2 (1%)
Cancer	56 (40%)
Terminal Illness	11 (8%)
Total	141

*Currently each caregiver is designated for one patient each. Number of caregivers by condition may double-count if their patients have been certified with multiple qualifying conditions.

Table 1 shows the number of patients with registered parents or legal guardians authorized to pick up medical cannabis on the patient's behalf.

Table 5

*Active Patients With Parents/Legal Guardians Authorized to Pick Up Medication**

Qualifying Condition	Patients with PLGs: N (%)
Glaucoma	0 (0%)
HIV/AIDS	0 (0%)
Tourette Syndrome	12 (5%)
ALS	1 (0%)
Seizures	184 (78%)
Muscle Spasms	17 (7%)
Crohn's Disease	2 (1%)
Cancer	20 (9%)
Terminal Illness	8 (3%)
Total	235

*Count of patients with PLGs may be included more than once if patients have been certified with multiple conditions.

Health Care Practitioners

Health care practitioners who can certify a patient’s qualifying medical condition are Minnesota licensed physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs). The health care practitioner must be enrolled in the medical cannabis registry before certifying a patient’s qualifying medical condition.

As can be seen in Figure 6, the number of health care practitioners registering with the program is still increasing, but at a steady rate.

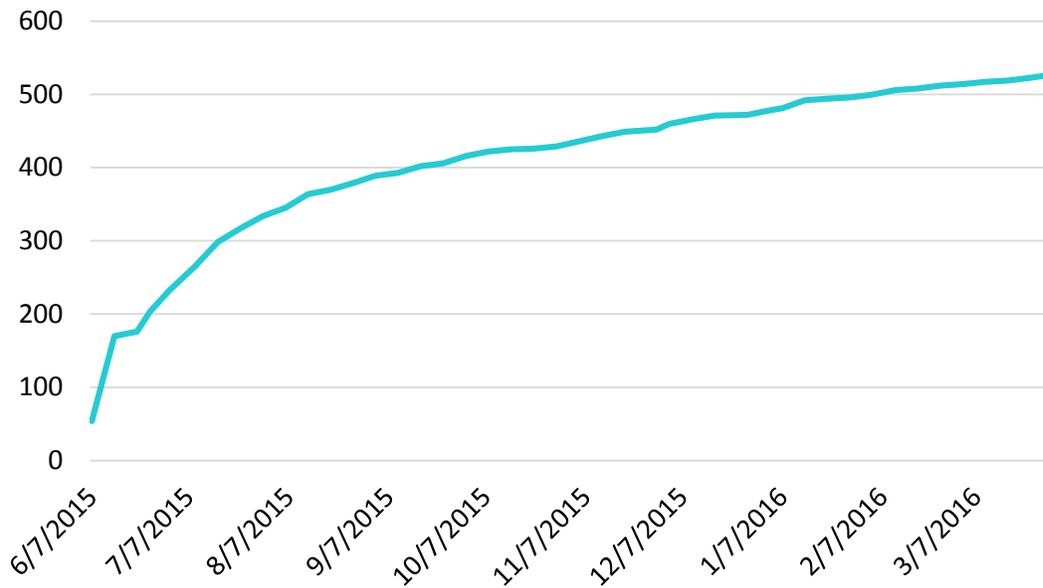


Figure 6. Count of registered health care practitioners actively in the patient registry since the program start.

Table 6 shows that of the 527 health care practitioners approved in the registry system (as of 3/31/16), 437 are physicians, 25 are physician assistants, and 65 are APRNs.

Table 6	
Breakdown of Active Health Care Practitioners by Type	
Physician	437 (83%)
Physician Assistant	25 (5%)
Advance Practice RN	65 (12%)
Total	527

MN MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM UPDATE, APRIL 2016

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