

AT YOUR SERVICE

NEWS FROM THE VAN BUREN/CASS DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Medical Marijuana

The Michigan Medical Marijuana Program (MMMP) was passed by public referendum on November 4, 2008. Most medical providers and health departments have received numerous calls pertaining to this including: When will you have some for me?; How do I register?; and What medical conditions qualify?

This MMP is a State Registry Program and not run by local health departments. However, we have of course been providing information.

A brief summary of key points for physicians:

- The registry program will not be operational until April 4, 2009.
 - Application forms (yet to be finalized) will be provided by the State and will include written certification by physicians. Physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and chiropractors will not be qualified to sign.
 - Physicians are under absolutely no obligation to participate with the program and can not be compelled to sign the certification form. This can be their general policy or done on a case by case basis.
 - Any MD or DO licensed in Michigan may participate.
 - Patients must have an "established relationship" (at least an office visit) and be "under the care" of the physician that signs the attending physician statement form.
- A physician who signs the certification form is NOT prescribing marijuana and marijuana will not be dispensed by pharmacies.
 - Qualifying debilitating medical conditions have been identified.
 - The patient is responsible for a \$100 application to the state registry (\$25 if Medicaid or SSI benefit recipient).
 - A valid Registry identification card will allow a patient or their personal primary care provider (this is not a physician) to possess up to 2.5 ounces or grow up to 12 marijuana plants.
 - Buying and selling marijuana is still illegal as is driving under the influence. The registration card that a recipient or their caretaker may have does not allow buying and selling!
 - Use of medical marijuana may still be prohibited by a workplace, nursing home, assisted living facility, or retirement home, at their discretion.
 - There is no reciprocity with the MMP and other States.
 - Legal issues for renters in the Michigan Medical Marijuana Program remain concerning smoking or growing marijuana.

Further information call 517-373-6873 or can be found at www.michigan.gov/mmp.

This site includes a comprehensive list of qualifying conditions.

(Editorial Note: Since buying and selling is illegal, we may have to return to the pre-Pasteur era of spontaneous generation)

Speaking of Smoking

Smoke free legislation will again be a key issue in the Michigan legislature. We just missed last year. Please speak to your legislators and check out the smoke free air website:

www.makemaiasmokefree.com

Our neighbor, Berrien County's smoke free legislation has been a huge success, but we need state legislation to have all our bars and restaurants smoke free. Please see the reverse side for key issues and talking points.

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Dangers of Secondhand Smoke:

- 1) 21.9% of Michigan adults smoke.
- 2) 17% (101,400) of high school students smoke.
- 3) Secondhand smoke causes between 35,000 and 62,000 deaths from heart disease every year.
- 4) 12,000 otherwise healthy nonsmokers will die of some form of cancer, 3,000 specifically to lung cancer, because of their exposure to secondhand smoke.
- 5) Secondhand smoke contains over 4,000 substances, more than 69 of which are known or suspected to cause cancer.
- 6) According to the American Cancer Society, secondhand smoke is the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing 38,000 to 65,000 nonsmokers every year.
- 7) Food service workers appear to be 50 percent more likely than the general population to develop lung cancer, largely because many of them are exposed to secondhand smoke on the job.
- 8) Studies show secondhand smoke may be a major factor in the development of asthma in children under five.
- 9) Secondhand smoke is a serious trigger of asthma and can cause or worsen respiratory conditions. Studies have shown that children with asthma who are exposed to secondhand smoke require more asthma medicines, have more emergency room visits and lower lung function.
- 10) \$3.4 billion—Annual health care costs in Michigan directly caused by smoking
\$1.1 billion—Portion covered by the state Medicaid program.
\$637—Per household resident's state and federal tax burden from smoking-caused government expenditures.
\$3.80 billion—Smoking-caused productivity losses in Michigan.
- 11) Michigan's government already regulates several areas of workplace and restaurant policies in the name of public health. Employees should not be forced to sacrifice their health because they need to earn a paycheck.
- 12) A Michigan smoke free workplace law is supported by more than 70 organizations, including the Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Michigan State Medical Society, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and American Lung Association and is strongly supported by Michigan voters.