



The Maryland State Medical Society

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MEDCHI ISSUES STANDARDS FOR RECOMMENDATION OF MEDICAL CANNABIS

BALTIMORE, April 25, 2016 — MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, held its Spring House of Delegates meeting on Sunday, April 17, 2016. During this meeting, MedChi set policy on several issues, one of which was Medical Cannabis Physician Recommender Professionalism Standards.

Gene Ransom, MedChi CEO, states “although MedChi has not taken a position on the medical utility of cannabis, the society decided that it would be advisable to set standards physicians who choose to consider recommending to their patients in accordance with the new Maryland law.” MedChi’s policy, adapted from similar standards set by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, provides the following guidelines for physician recommenders of medical cannabis:

A physician will -

- Be able to have good-faith discussions with patients without conversations on such topics between clinicians and patients being considered illegal or unprofessional acts.
- Adhere to the established professional tenets of proper patient care, including: history-taking and good faith examination of the patient; development of a treatment plan with clinical objectives; provision of informed consent, including discussion of potential adverse drug effects from use; periodic review of the treatment’s efficacy; consultation, as necessary, with other clinical colleagues; and proper record keeping that supports the clinical decision to recommend the use of cannabis.
- Have a bona fide patient-physician relationship with the patient, i.e., should establish an ongoing relationship with the patient as a treating physician when there is not a pre-existing relationship, and should offer recommendations regarding the use of marijuana within the context of other indicated treatment for the patient’s condition; they should not offer themselves to the public as solely a permit authorizing individual.
- Ensure that the issuance of “recommendations” is not a disproportionately large aspect of their practice.
- Have adequate training in identifying addiction and unhealthy substance use.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. Formed in 1799, it is still the largest physician organization in Maryland today. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland’s foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.