



Annual State of the States Report Released at NCSL

Americans for Safe Access released its annual report evaluating state medical cannabis laws today at the Legislative Summit of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) in Nashville, Tennessee.

The 2019 *State of the States Report: An Analysis of Medical Cannabis Access in the United States* grades each state's laws and regulations on how they affect patient access. The report finds that while medical cannabis access has improved significantly nationwide since California passed the first state law in 1996, state programs are still struggling to serve all patients in need. Between 2018 and 2019, there were over 2,000 state bills introduced that dealt with cannabis programs.

The nearly 200-page report provides a detailed analysis of the state of medical cannabis programs in 47 states, the District of Columbia, and four territories on a 'A' to 'F' scale.



Each state was assessed in six categories: 1) Patient rights and civil protections; 2) Access to medicine; 3) Ease of navigation; 4) Functionality; 5) Consumer safety and provider requirements; and 6) Medical cannabis as a tool in combating the opioid epidemic. Special consideration was given for developing policies to help alleviate the opioid crisis.

In addition to evaluating state medical cannabis programs according to ASA's patient-focused grading rubric, the report also includes

responses from a survey of over 500 individual patients. This survey revealed that affordability has been one of the most consistent critiques and the single greatest challenge patients face.

ASA is distributing printed versions of the report among the thousands of state legislators and staff attending the NCSL Summit from August 4-8. ASA staff will be at booth number 1216. ASA is also co-hosting two events in Nashville. The first is Sunday evening, August 4 and is sponsored by WeedMaps. The second is Wednesday evening, August 7 and is sponsored by Eaze. Both are open to NCSL attendees and the public. Anyone interested can contact Reenal@safeaccessnow.org.

Montana Lab Achieves Dual Certification

Last month, Stillwater Laboratory in Olney, Montana became the first analytic laboratory in that state to achieve dual certification through both ASA's Patient Focused Certification (PFC) program and the ISO/IEC 17025 standard of the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA).

The dual certification is the result of a collaboration between ASA and A2LA that began in October 2018 to expand PFC accreditation based on the requirements of both ISO/IEC 17025 and the PFC standards.

"Stillwater Labs is honored to have received dual PFC/ISO 17025 accreditation," said Dr. Ron Brost, Laboratory Director. "ISO 17025-compliant quality processes are the backbone of our lab, but the cannabis-specific standards that come with PFC are a much-needed addition to the emergent medical marijuana testing world. To this end, PFC requirements have been adopted as an essential part of our toolbox for continuous improvement."

To achieve PFC certification, laboratories must pass two assessments each cycle. Assessments involve a facility inspection and document review for criteria such as method validation reports, employee training records, and other requirements that are applicable by law.

For more information about PFC certification, training, and education, contact Heather Despres (heather@safeaccessnow.org) or visit the PFC website.

CME Credits for Cannabis Training



ASA and TheAnswerPage.com are partnering to help educate medical professionals on the therapeutic potential of cannabis for a variety of conditions. ASA and TheAnswerPage.com have launched an initiative to provide professionals with continuing medical education (CME) credits through their Cannabis Care Certification (CCC) website, which has offered education for patients and caregivers since 2016.

The CCC Comprehensive Medical Marijuana Curriculum, created by The Answer Page, starts with the endocannabinoid system and its interaction with the components of the cannabis plant. The curriculum also addresses clinical considerations for cannabinoid-based medicines, including administration, therapeutic

use, drug metabolism, physiologic and cognitive effects, potential risks, and interactions.

The new CCC curriculum was approved for CME credit under the latest rules for dealing with controversial subjects. Credits are approved through the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, American Nurses Credentialing Center, and the American Psychological Association.



CANNABIS CARE CERTIFICATION
A project of Americans for Safe Access Foundation and TheAnswerPage

A special \$20 discount and other benefits are available to those who enroll through the CCC website using code **CCC2019**.

ASA Sonoma Hosts Symposium Aug. 10

Sonoma ASA is partnering with Whole Plant Access for Autism (WPA4A) to host an educational symposium, Medical Cannabis for Neurological Conditions, will be held Saturday, August 10, from 10am-2:30pm at Luther Burbank Center for the Arts in Santa Rosa, California.

Pediatric cannabis specialists Dr. Bonni Goldstein and Dr. Bao Le will be speaking, along with the cofounders of WPA4A and ASA's PFC Director, Heather Despres. Guest

speakers include Joe Rogoway, Vicki Lynn (caregiver/mother), and Martin Lee of Project CBD. Sonoma ASA chapter chair Sara Shradler will be moderating the Q&A panel.

The symposium is a chance to learn more about how cannabis-based medicines can be used to treat various neurological conditions.

ASA chapters and affiliates can send event information to william@safeaccessnow.org for mention in the ASA Activist Newsletter.

Activist Profile: Jana Adams, Sonoma, California

Jana Adams is on a two-pronged mission to educate people about what medical cannabis can do for children with seizure disorders. On the one hand, she's spent the last few years explaining to California lawmakers why state law needs to accommodate medical cannabis in schools. On the other, she's sharing with others the knowledge and resources that were so hard for her to come by as she looked for solutions for her daughter.



Through trial and error with various types of cannabis extracts, Jason developed a cannabis oil he calls Jayden's Juice that has proven effective when nothing else worked. At an event for parents Jason put on in Modesto, Jana heard from doctors, specialists, and other parents about the potential cannabis holds for treating neurological conditions. She took her sister-in-law, a nurse, so she could understand and explain the medical side.

special education student, but the school district refused to allow her to attend a public preschool because of her need to have cannabis oil with her as a rescue medicine for when seizures started.

"At first, they just offered to send a teacher for an hour a day, but we fought all summer trying to find a preschool," Jana says. "We negotiated an agreement for the district to pay for a private preschool, a one-on-one nurse to attend, and special help."

Last September, a judge ruled against the district's arguments for excluding Brooke and said they have to allow her to attend, and her nurse can give her the cannabis oil as needed.

Last year, Brooke was in a special education kindergarten classroom with eight students, but this fall she will transition to an inclusion classroom with general education students.

Jana has been pursuing a change in law to accommodate other children like Brooke, encouraging California state lawmakers to advance legislation that would allow medical cannabis in public schools.



Brooke has three older siblings, ages 13, 15 and 18. The demands of Brooke's care have meant the family has changed vacations and other

routines, often at the expense of the other children, but they understand her needs, and the turn to cannabis. The oldest came home from college to join Jana at the ASA/California NORML lobby day in Sacramento on May 1.

Brooke hadn't even reached her first birthday when the seizures started. In March 2014, she was diagnosed with Dravet Syndrome, a rare, severe seizure disorder. Soon she was on three seizure medications but still having episodes that lasted up to three hours. Attempts to control them at the hospital led to her being given so much medication she couldn't breathe on her own, coded, and had to be intubated.

"It was the scariest time in my life," Jana says, "as I watched her seize over and over again, even after getting multiple doses of strong anti-seizure medications."

After a few days in the pediatric ICU, Brooke was able to go home, now with four medications to take twice a day. Jana quit her job to be a fulltime caregiver for Brooke and try to figure out a treatment plan.

A mutual friend introduced her to another parent of a child with Dravet Syndrome, Jason David, who had been exploring cannabis treatments after doctors had said there was nothing more they could do for his son, Jayden.

Clinical trials were then underway for Epidiolex, the CBD extract developed by GW Pharmaceuticals, but Brooke didn't qualify to participate because she was too young at not yet two, and her seizures, though they lasted for hours, came only every five weeks. Brooke's doctor suggested adding a fifth medication, Stiripentol, but Jana and her husband refused. Both were suspicious of cannabis, but it was time to try it.

In September 2014, Brooke got a recommendation from a local physician, and Jana registered as her caregiver. The CBD variety another parent recommended didn't work, but Jason David visited Santa Rosa that December, and Jana started Brooke on Jayden's Juice. The seizures dropped by half.

They went back to the neurologist to talk about weaning Brooke off the benzodiazepines. As she tapered off, they add some THC to ease the withdrawal symptoms. She reduced her previous medications by half.

Once Brooke turned three, she got an IEP as a

ACTION ALERT: Send States Report to Your Lawmakers

Your state lawmakers need to know how to better meet the needs of medical cannabis patients. Use the link below to send them ASA State of the States Report so they have the tools to improve safe access in your state. It's quick and easy, so take action today! www.safeaccessnow.org/share_sos2019.

"Going away and coming back helped him see how much it's changed her quality of life," Jana says. "He sent me a note saying 'thanks for doing so much for Brooke.'"

Even Brooke's 13-year-old sister understands what's at stake. She's also in a caregiver role, administering cannabis oil when needed. She even filmed the seizure that was shown during a Today Show segment about Brooke, and intervened with a history teacher who made disparaging comments about cannabis.

Since Brooke's case became public, Jana has connected with parents about treatment and lobbying to get bills passed in New Mexico, Colorado and New Hampshire. To help educate folks closer to home in Santa Rosa, Jana helped organize the August 10 symposium with Dr. Bonni Goldstein, Brooke's physician from Los Angeles, and other experts. Attendees will also have a chance to learn how to lobby from other parents who have worked to get bills passed in the other states.

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