

**Oppose: SB0304** - Natalie  
LaPrade Medical Cannabis  
Commission - Certifying Providers

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- ❖ **Physician Assistants are less qualified than physicians to rise above the problems with the current Maryland medical cannabis program.**
- ❖ **For example, once a healthcare professional is certified to be a provider by the Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission, there is no mechanism in place for the Commission to revoke, restrict or otherwise flag the certification based on complaints about the practitioner's cannabis practice.** Complaints that I know of range from failure to screen for prior cannabis addiction or prior adverse reactions, to failure to follow the patient to check for emerging side effects. For physicians, disciplinary action is left to the *Maryland Board of Physicians*.
- ❖ **Healthcare professionals rely on the FDA for prescribing information about drugs,** but the FDA does not provide information about medical cannabis in the form approved by the states. Thus, the *Maryland Board of Physicians* has no standards to guide them in assessing compliance with accepted medical cannabis practice. The same would be true for the oversight of Physician Assistants.
- ❖ **Physicians are usually trained to a higher level than *Physician Assistants*** in terms of the ability to access and interpret the emerging scientific literature on cannabis and cannabinoids.
- ❖ **Furthermore, the online tutorial *Physician Assistants* will take to be certified, one approved by the Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission for healthcare providers is concerning,** (<https://themedicalcannabisinstitute.org/product/maryland-provider-education-medical-use-of-cannabis-1-0/>), produced by a Dr. Ethan Russo of the Czech Republic. From an editorial authored by him (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6200872/pdf/fnint-12-00051.pdf>) it is clear that his perspectives on THC treatment of some psychiatric conditions (agitation, insomnia, depression, aggression) are at odds with the views expressed by major U.S. medical societies listed below. What else might be of concern is not clear without paying for the tutorial.
- ❖ **In contrast to numerous professional societies for Physicians, *Physician Assistants* will not find guidance from their professional society.** *The American Academy of Physician Assistants* has no position paper or information on cannabis on its website: <https://www.aapa.org/>

- ❖ Here is a sampling of information provided by professional societies for medical doctors (**\*starred societies are specialties which advocate for FDA-approved components only and recommend against using cannabis for patients treated by the specialty disciplines;** note cannabis is not the same thing as pharmaceutical grade CBD or other products currently approved by the FDA; the potential *risks* of cannabis that are referred to by the societies below include ***psychosis and schizophrenia, depression, anxiety, suicide, increased blood pressure, increased respiratory rates, cardiac arrhythmia, heart failure, worsening of glaucoma, cognitive impairment, addiction, allergic reactions, accidental poisoning and coma in children, preterm births to pregnant women, and impacts on fetal brain development, none of which are provided in warning labels on products currently sold in Maryland***):

**American Academy of Family Physicians**

<https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/marijuana-cannabinoids.html>

**American Academy of Neurology\***

<https://www.aan.com/policy-and-guidelines/policy/position-statements/medical-marijuana/>

**American Academy of Sleep Medicine\***

<https://aasm.org/advocacy/position-statements/medical-cannabis-obstructive-sleep-apnea/>

**American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology**

<https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/library/allergy-library/marijuana-cannabis-allergy>

**American Academy of Ophthalmology\***

<https://www.aao.org/newsroom/news-releases/detail/american-academy-of-ophthalmology-reiterates-posit>

**American College of Cardiology**

<https://www.acc.org/about-acc/press-releases/2020/01/22/11/58/research-suggests-potential-link-between-marijuana-and-heart-risks>

**American Society of Clinical Oncology\***

<https://www.asco.org/about-asco/press-center/news-releases/new-recommendations-controlling-nausea-and-vomiting-related>

**American Academy of Pediatrics\***

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/135/3/584.full.pdf>

**American Psychiatric Association**

<https://www.psychiatry.org/home/policy-finder?k=marijuana>

**The Maryland Psychiatric Society\***

<https://mdpsych.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Recommendations.pdf>

**American Gastroenterological Association\***

<https://www.gastro.org/news/predicting-the-future-role-of-cannabis-for-ibd-treatment>

**American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists\***

<https://www.acog.org/-/media/Departments/Tobacco-Alcohol-and-Substance-Abuse/Marijuana-Info-ONLINE.pdf?dmc=1&ts=20190406T1338446467>

**American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry\***

[https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Policy\\_Statements/2012/AACAP\\_Medical\\_Marijuana\\_Policy\\_Statement.aspx](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Policy_Statements/2012/AACAP_Medical_Marijuana_Policy_Statement.aspx)

[https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Policy\\_Statements/2019/Use\\_of\\_Medical\\_Marijuana\\_in\\_Children\\_and\\_Adolescents\\_with\\_Autism\\_Spectrum\\_Disorder\\_for\\_Core\\_Autism\\_S.aspx](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Policy_Statements/2019/Use_of_Medical_Marijuana_in_Children_and_Adolescents_with_Autism_Spectrum_Disorder_for_Core_Autism_S.aspx)

- ❖ **Of the non-physicians currently allowed to recommend marijuana in Maryland, none of their professional societies have a written statement providing medical information specific to cannabis, or advising on use in patients.** The American Dental Association has a webinar which strongly advises against cannabis use. The American Association of Nurse Practitioners provide only a written strategic policy for members as it pertains to their authority.

**American Dental Association**

<https://www.ada.org/en> a webinar on risks of marijuana

**National Association of Certified Professional Midwives**

<https://nacpm.org/> no information

**American College of Nurse Midwives**

<https://www.midwife.org/> no information

**American Association of Nurse Practitioners**

<https://www.aanp.org> "The American Association of Nurse Practitioners® (AANP) recognizes that there is evidence for the therapeutic use of marijuana and related compounds and that nurse practitioners (NPs) are frequently the health care provider patients look to for health care treatments. AANP supports efforts for ongoing scientific review of medicinal use of marijuana, establishment of evidence-based therapeutic recommendations for marijuana and the inclusion of marijuana and cannabinoid in nursing education and continuing education. AANP supports policies that authorize NPs to discuss treatments and treatment alternatives in open and direct dialog with their patients. AANP believes that these conversations are essential to patient care and should be exempt from criminal or professional prosecution, such as loss of licensure."