

Medical Cannabis Policy Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 16, 2:00 pm-5:00 pm

This meeting was held in person and virtually.

This meeting was recorded. An audio copy of this recording can be found on the Utah Public Notice Website (<https://www.utah.gov/pmn/>).

Visit the board's website for more information on past meeting minutes and agendas (<https://medicalcannabis.utah.gov/>).

Attendees

Board members attending: Kent Andersen, Nanette Berezhnyy, Cami Clark, CMHC, Anthony Griffiths, Desiree Hennessy, Melissa Hinton, J. D. Lauritzen, Blake Smith, and Misty Smith, PhD.

DHHS/UDAF staff attending: Dr. Brandon Forsyth, Richard Oborn, Trevor Eckhoff, and Jada Stelmach

Agenda

1. Welcome

Ms. Hennessy acknowledged that there was a quorum so the meeting could proceed at approximately 2:00 pm and read the introduction script.

2. Board approval of May 2026 minutes

Ms. Hennessy asked the board if there were any proposed changes to the May 19, 2026 minutes. There were no changes proposed. Mr. Smith motioned to approve the May 2026 minutes and Ms. Clark seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the May 2026 minutes.

3. Board administrative business

Ms. Hennessy announced that this month marks the annual election for board leadership.

- Chair Election: Ms. Hennessy nominated Nanette Berezchnyy to serve as Chair. The board voted unanimously to approve Ms. Berezchnyy as the new Chair.
- Vice Chair Election: Ms. Berezchnyy nominated Blake Smith to serve as Vice Chair. The board voted unanimously to approve Mr. Smith as the new Vice Chair.

4. DHHS and UDAF update

- a. DHHS updates: Mr. Oborn informed the board about:
 - i. Controlled substance database integration.
 - ii. EVS software changes.
 - iii. New DHHS and state logos.
 - iv. Current program statistics.
- b. UDAF updates: Dr. Forsyth informed the board about:
 - i. New licensing board directors recruitment.
 - ii. Patient fees.

5. Committee updates

The board held initial discussions regarding newly established subcommittees:

- Patient Access Committee: Focus areas include analyzing why patients leave, join, or discontinue the program; enhancing patient education regarding therapeutic benefits and alternative products; and optimizing safety alongside positive patient outcomes. The committee noted UDAF market analysis data highlighting that many medical cannabis users remain unaware of the legal program, and announced that the Center for Medical Cannabis Research (CMCR) will study sleep as its next indication.
- Industry Committee: The committee intends to meet monthly following general board meetings and has invited all horizontal and vertical licensees. Initial initiatives will focus on analyzing statutes and rules to decrease operational costs, such as testing frequency and costs, and evaluating how the program can better align with a federal Schedule III framework without compromising robust testing standards.
- Research & Education Committee: The group is coordinating a meeting with CMCR leadership to partner on educational milestones. The committee also proposed a state-backed educational or media push with UDAF to raise public awareness of program safety.
- Policy & Rules Committee: No update provided as the committee has not formally met.

6. Expanding qualifying conditions and Compassionate Use Board elimination

The board reviewed a memo reiterating and expanding on its November recommendation to eliminate the Compassionate Use Board (CUB) petition process for minors, adults aged 18 to 20, and adults over 21 without a qualifying condition, replacing it with the professional judgment of a recommending medical provider (RMP).

Ms. Smith advised removing glaucoma from the memo's general observations due to clinical data showing intraocular pressure variance risks. The board discussed the importance of data collection for newly explored conditions and the necessity of engaging in direct dialogue with lawmakers to identify specific guardrails or policy hangups preventing the adoption of doctor discretion.

The following public members gave comments on this agenda item:

- Jeff Archuleta, a medical cannabis patient, commented on whole-plant medicine's role in establishing homeostasis and questioned if it could be considered a qualifying condition.
- Narith Panh with Dragonfly Wellness suggested utilizing UDAF's "Utah's Own" marketing program to boost legal program awareness and claimed prior exclusion of medical cannabis from the program.
- Valerie Ahanonu, speaking on her own behalf, supported clinical provider education to ensure peace of mind when recommending medical cannabis. She offered to share a comprehensive cross-state spreadsheet detailing qualifying conditions and stipulations across the country.
- Alan Roth with Curaleaf expressed support for expanding the program and paths toward medical provider discretion to recommend medical cannabis for any condition.

7. Additional medical cannabis dosage forms

Ms. Berezchnyy presented comparative data on approved dosage forms across medical-only states, noting that Iowa, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia closely mirror Utah's approach. The board evaluated several constraints within the current framework.

The following public members gave comments on this agenda item:

- Alan Roth with Curaleaf suggested an educational campaign focused on bio-availability and fat intake (such as eating specific foods alongside medication). He noted that Florida permits chocolates, baked goods, and pre-rolls, and previous attempts in 2025 to gain approval for an infused flower product category.

8. Next meeting's agenda

The board agreed to include formal progress reports from the newly structured committees. Dr. Forsyth agreed to present a walkthrough of the new academic medical cannabis research application portal available on the UDAF website for researchers seeking to work with medical cannabis.

9. Adjourn

Ms. Berezhnyy motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to end the meeting and the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:50 pm.