



**New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission**

# Report on the 2020 Medicinal Marijuana Program

**Summarizing Efforts by the Division of Medicinal  
Marijuana, Department of Health**

**Adopted July 18, 2024**



---

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Regulatory Process and Covid-19 Pandemic Response</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Medicinal Marijuana Review Panel</b>	<b>3</b>
Table 1: Medicinal Marijuana Review Panel	3
<b>Enrollment Process</b>	<b>4</b>
Table 2: Patient Enrollment By Month	4
<b>Budget</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Alternative Treatment Centers</b>	<b>5</b>
2018 Request for Applications	5
2019 Request for Applications	5
Permit Issuances	5
Table 3: Permits Issued in 2020	6
Revocations	6
Enrollment	7
Table 4: Unique Patients by ATC	7
Dispensing	7

Program Statistics (as of December 31, 2020) . . . . . 8

Table 5: Patient Registration Data . . . . . 8

Table 6: Caregiver Data. . . . . 8

Table 7: Physician Registration Data . . . . . 8

Table 8: Alternative Treatment Center Investigations . . . . . 8

Table 9: Alternative Treatment Center Permits. . . . . 9

Table 10: Nature of Patients Qualifying Condition . . . . . 9

Figure 1: Nature of Patient Debilitating Conditions . . . . . 10

Figure 2: 2020 Physicians Enrolled in Medicinal Marijuana Program, by Specialty  
. . . . . 11

Table 11: Patients by Age Distribution . . . . . 12

Figure 3: Patients by Age Group Bar Chart. . . . . 12

Table 12: Patient Gender Distribution . . . . . 13

Figure 4: Patient Gender Breakdown Pie Chart. . . . . 13

Figure 5: Active Patients by County. . . . . 14

Table 12: Active Patients by County . . . . . 15

County . . . . . 15

Active Patients . . . . . 15

Figure 6: Patients by County Sorted Descending . . . . . 16

---

# Introduction

---

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 24:6I-24, the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission assumed all powers, duties, and responsibilities with regard to the regulation and oversight of medicinal cannabis activities from the New Jersey Department of Health (Department or DOH). This report summarizes the efforts of the Department of Health's Division of Medicinal Marijuana in the calendar year 2020.

For the Division of Medicinal Marijuana, 2020 marked a year filled with challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Expansion of the medicinal cannabis industry resulting from the 2018 Request for Applications (herein referred to as 2018 RFA) continued with new facilities opening throughout the year, however, alternative treatment centers (ATCs), patients, caregivers and healthcare providers (HCPs) all had to adjust to operating amidst a global pandemic. The Department made several quick policy changes to enable ATCs to stay open and serve patients in a safe manner and worked to address ongoing access to medicinal cannabis with partner agencies.

Even with the pandemic, participation in New Jersey's Medical Marijuana Program (MMP) grew significantly in 2020, adding over 62,000 new patients to the program. This brought the total number of first-time patients registered since the program's inception to 151,561- representing a 70% increase in participation compared to the prior year when the total number of new patients since inception was 89,363.

The program also added 1,934 new active caregivers - an increase of approximately 54% up to 3,837 active caregivers. The program also saw a 15% increase (198) in healthcare provider enrollment to bring the total number HCPs participating to 1,515.

The program served patients with 18 debilitating conditions, including more than 45,000 patients suffering from chronic pain and musculoskeletal disorders.

This report details the statistics and major developments in the program for the calendar year 2020 and provides details on the Department's budget for the program and the regulatory process.

---

## **Regulatory Process and Covid-19 Pandemic Response**

---

Nearly all the Department's regulatory initiatives related to medicinal cannabis in 2020 were centered on responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 9, 2020, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order #103 which declared a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency in New Jersey related to the spread of COVID-19. On March 21, 2020, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order #107 which directed New Jerseyans to stay at home and established "essential businesses" which were permitted to continue brick-and-mortar operations during the stay-at-home order. Alternative Treatment Centers were included as essential businesses.

Like many essential businesses, ATCs experienced extremely high patient volume during March 2020. In order to assist ATCs in serving patients safely during the pandemic, and to allow ATCs to operate effectively, the Department issued several regulatory waivers and guidance to allow businesses to safely continue operations during the public health emergency. These included waivers and guidance that allowed for:

- Curbside dispensing and telephonic consultations – Instead of requiring sales and consultations to occur in person inside the facilities, the DOH allowed ATCs to serve patients in their cars from the curb, which reduced contact and allowed for greater social distancing. The waiver allowed for telephonic consultations so patients could receive product information from ATC staff over the phone. (March 2020)
- Reduced fees for all caregivers – In order to help vulnerable patients stay out of public places, DOH issued a waiver that reduced caregiver fees from \$100 to \$20, enabling patients to more easily utilize a friend or loved one to pick up medicinal cannabis on the patient's behalf. (March 2020)
- Expedited onboarding for new ATC employees – As background check appointments were not available for months during the pandemic, DOH enabled ATCs to onboard employees without the legally required full criminal history check, provided the employee attested to having no disqualifying convictions and that they would comply with the statutory requirement as soon as practicable. (March 2020)
- Home delivery – In June 2020, the Department waived a regulatory prohibition on home delivery. (June 2020)

In August 2020 the Division of Consumer Affairs and the Office of the Attorney General issued a waiver allowing healthcare providers to use telemedicine to see patients being treated with medicinal cannabis.

---

## Education

---

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, external-facing education initiatives were ceased during 2020.

## Medicinal Marijuana Review Panel

---

The table below lists the confirmed Medicinal Marijuana Review Panel members, their specialty area, and requirements as per the MMP Rules and Regulations.

**Table 1: Medicinal Marijuana Review Panel**

Panel Member	Specialty	Rule Requirement
Vacant	President, New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners	President, New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners
Alex Bekker, MD, PhD Chairperson	Anesthesiology	Pain & symptom management expertise/physician
Petros Levounis, MD, MA	Psychiatry Addiction Medicine	Pain & symptom management expertise/physician
Cheryl Kennedy, MD Vice Chairperson	Psychiatrist Addiction Medicine	Pain & symptom management expertise/physician
Jessica Ann Scerbo, MD	Pediatric, Hematology & Oncology	Physician
Mary L. Johansen, PhD	Nursing	Non-physician
Mary M. Bridgeman, Pharm D.	Pharmacist	Non-physician
Stephanie Zarus, Pharm D.	Pain Management	Non-physician

---

## Enrollment Process

---

Patient enrollment continued to accelerate throughout 2020, with 62,198 patient enrollments occurring in the calendar year. In October of that year, the Department saw more than 8,000 enrollments in a month for the first time since the program's inception.

**Table 2: Patient Enrollment By Month**

Month	New Patient Enrollments
January	3,435
February	3,879
March	4,218
April	3,425
May	4,114
June	4,909
July	5,459
August	7,528
September	7,438
October	8,062
November	5,455
December	4,276
<b>Total</b>	<b>62,198</b>

## Budget

---

In Fiscal Year 2020, the Division of Medicinal Marijuana received an appropriation of \$857,000 and \$4,301,089 in revenues from permitting and registration fees. The Division of Medicinal Marijuana expended \$3,585,769.00.

---

# Alternative Treatment Centers

---

## 2018 Request for Applications

In 2020, the Department concluded any remaining investigations related to the 2018 Request for Applications (RFA) award winners. [Documents from the 2018 RFA](#) are available on the Commission's website. All awardees passed inspections to begin cultivation, and most of the awardees received permits to begin dispensing.

In November 2020, the Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division, issued a decision in several appeals stemming from the 2018 awards. That decision remanded the 2018 RFA back to DOH for additional proceedings and invalidated the Final Agency Decisions for the appellants but kept in place the rest of the Final Agency Decisions, thus allowing permitting of the ATCs to continue.

## 2019 Request for Applications

On July 1, 2019, the Department issued an additional [Request for Applications](#) for alternative treatment centers (herein referred to as the 2019 RFA). Released under updated regulations, the 2019 RFA called for 15 dispensaries, five cultivators, and four vertically integrated ATCs (encompassing permits to cultivate, manufacture and dispense). Applications were due in August 2019, but in November 2019, all application reviews were halted pursuant to a court order related to lawsuits by several applicants. [Documents from the 2019 RFA](#) are available on the Commission's website. The 2019 RFA remained halted during 2020.

## Permit Issuances

In 2020 there were 13 permits issued:

---

**Table 3: Permits Issued in 2020**

<b>Operational Date</b>	<b>Permit Holder</b>	<b>Permit Type</b>	<b>Municipality</b>
January-20	TerrAscend NJ	Cultivation	Boonton
January-20	MPX NJ	Cultivation	Pleasantville
February-20	Verano NJ	Cultivation	Branchburg
February-20	Columbia Care New Jersey	Cultivation	Vineland
February-20	Columbia Care New Jersey	Manufacturer	Vineland
April-20	BLOC (JG New Jersey)	Cultivation	Ewing
May-20	Columbia Care New Jersey	Alternative Treatment Center	Vineland
May-20	Verano NJ	Alternative Treatment Center	Elizabeth
June-20	Acreage CCF New Jersey	Alternative Treatment Center	Atlantic
September-20	Ayr (GSD)	Alternative Treatment Center	Eatontown
September-20	Acreage CCF New Jersey	Manufacturer	Egg Harbor
November-20	TerrAscend NJ	Alternative Treatment Center	Phillipsburg

## **Revocations**

There were no ATC permit revocations in 2020.

---

## Enrollment

In 2020, each ATC had the following numbers of unique patients assigned to them:

**Table 4: Unique Patients by ATC**

ATC	Unique Patients Assigned
Breakwater	16005
Curaleaf/Compassionate Sciences	43203
Columbia Care	984
Garden State Dispensary	21613
Harmony Foundation	10875
RISE	5612
Terascend	1369
The Botanist	10918
Verano	2649

Total: 113,228

## Dispensing

In total, ATCs dispensed 432,430 ounces (27,026 lbs.) of medicinal marijuana to registered patients in 2020.

<sup>1</sup>Some patients were assigned but never visited an ATC or purchased any products.

## Program Statistics (as of December 31, 2020)

**Table 5: Patient Registration Data**

	Total	
Active Patients	100,860	
	New in 2020	Total Since Program Inception
Patients Deceased	1,498	4,908
First Time Patient Registrations	62,198	151,561

**Table 6: Caregiver Data**

	Total	
Active Caregivers	3,837	
	New in 2020	Total since Program Inception
Total Caregiver Registrations	1,934	7,693

**Table 7: Physician Registration Data**

	Total	
Active Physicians	1,251	
	New in 2020	Total since Program Inception
Total Physician Activity	198	1,515

**Table 8: Alternative Treatment Center Investigations**

	New in 2020	Total since Program Inception
Initiated	0	12
Completed	0	7

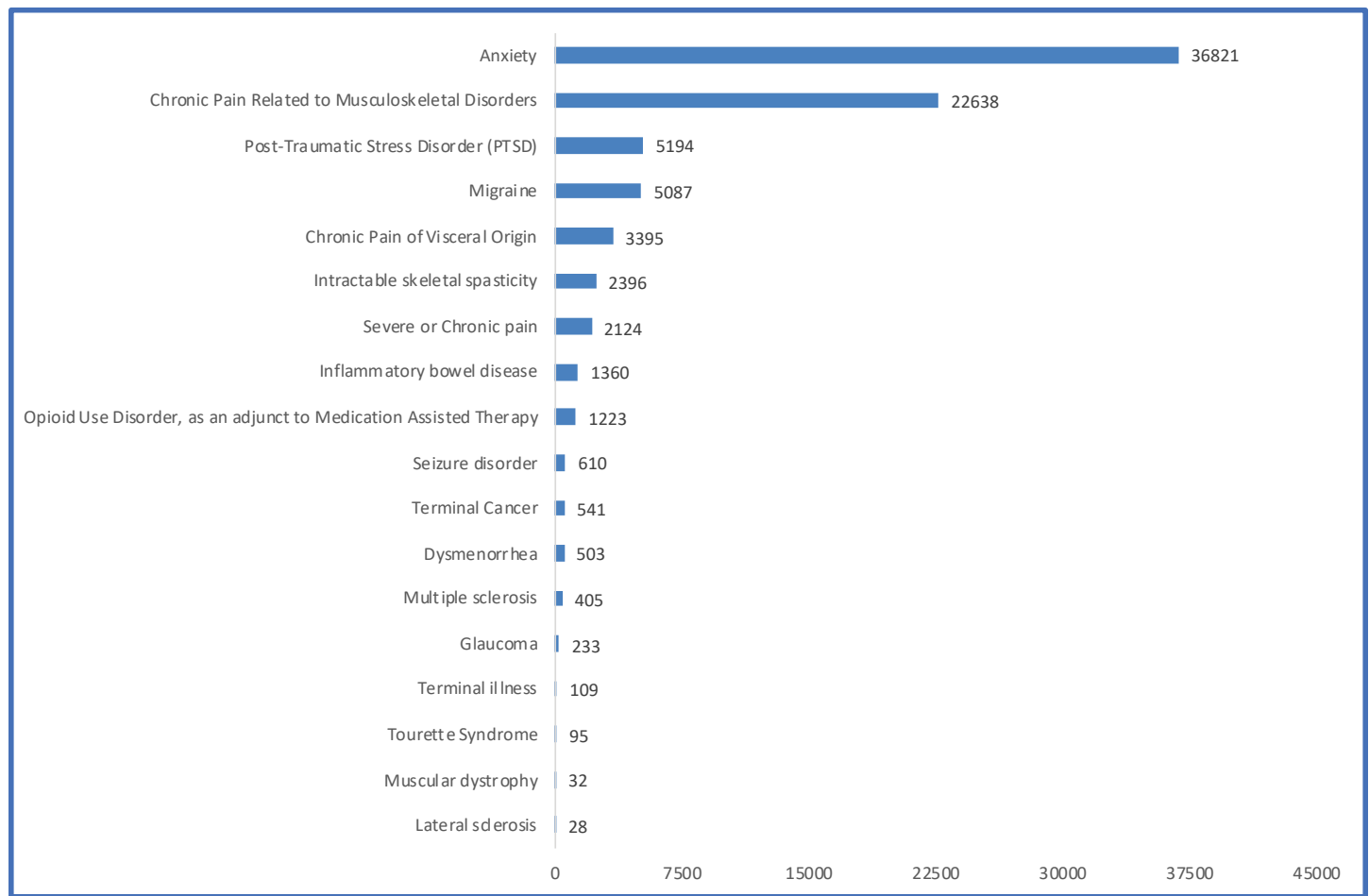
**Table 9: Alternative Treatment Center Permits**

	New in 2020	Total since Program Inception
Issued	5	14
Revoked	0	0

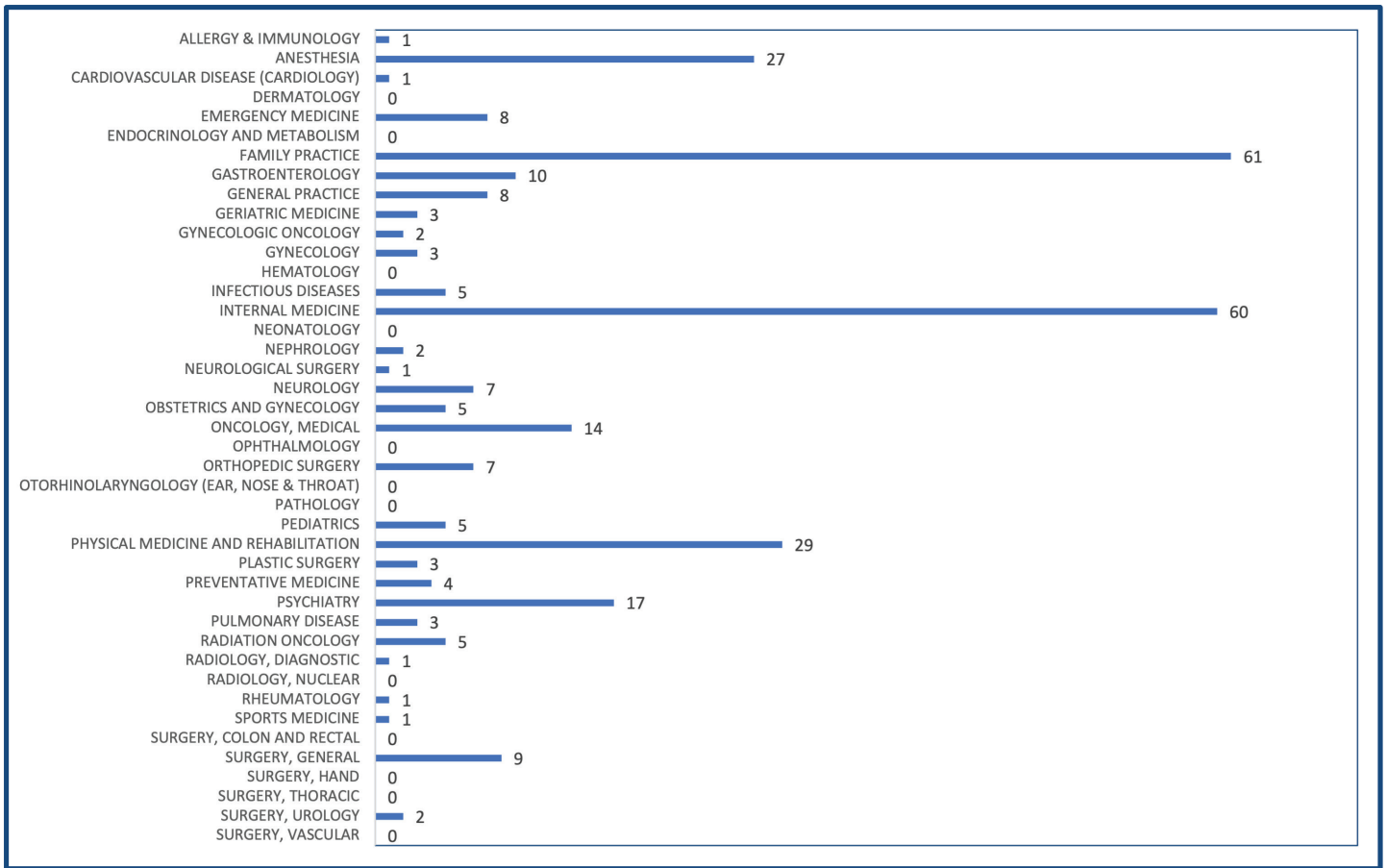
**Table 10: Nature of Patients Qualifying Condition**

Debilitating Condition	Total Patients
Anxiety	55886
Chronic Pain of Visceral Origin	5649
Chronic Pain Related to Musculoskeletal Disorders	45310
Dysmenorrhea	510
Glaucoma	662
Inflammatory bowel disease	3673
Intractable skeletal spasticity	10456
Lateral sclerosis	71
Migraine	8592
Multiple sclerosis	1654
Muscular dystrophy	119
Opioid Use Disorder, as an adjunct to Medication	2031
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	10389
Seizure disorder	1677
Severe or Chronic pain	4276
Terminal Cancer	1026
Terminal illness	190
Tourette Syndrome	199

## Figure 1: Nature of Patient Debilitating Conditions



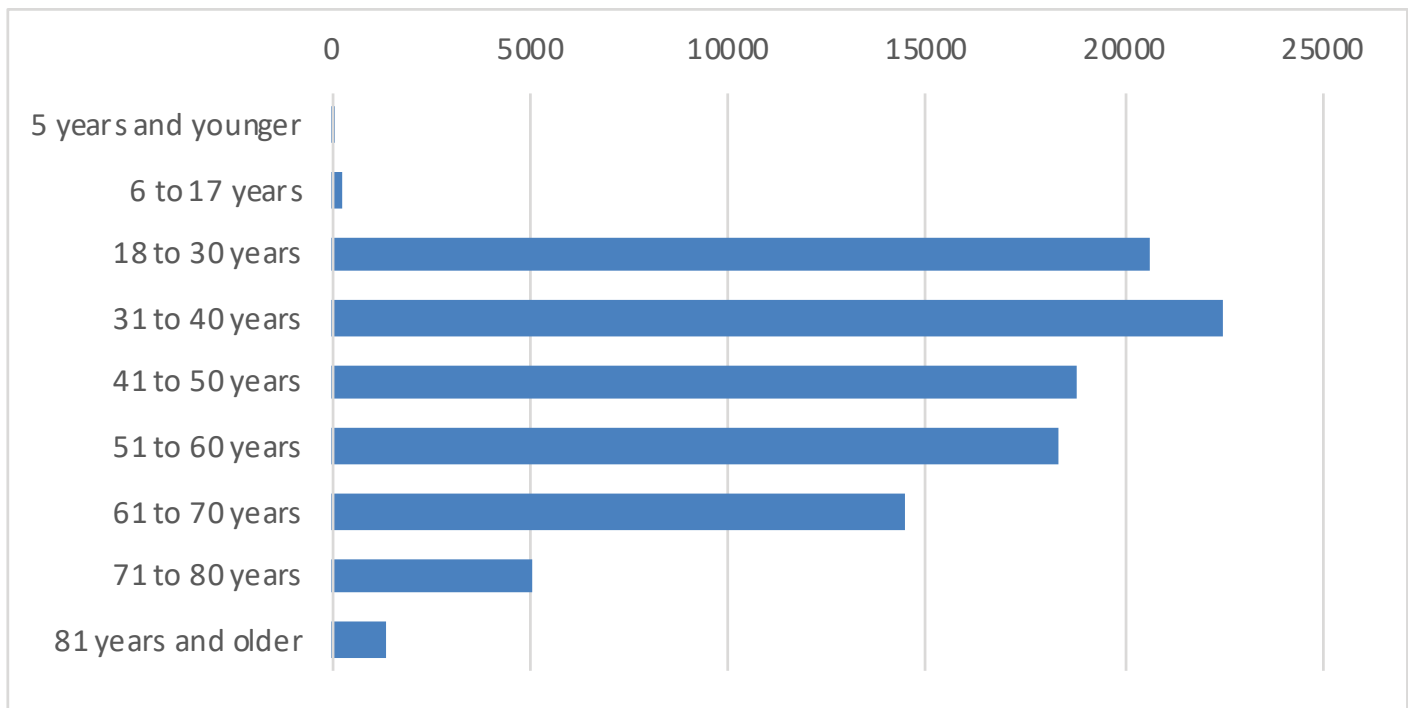
**Figure 2: 2020 Physicians Enrolled in Medicinal Marijuana Program, by Specialty**



**Table 11: Patients by Age Distribution**

Patients by Age	Number	Percentage
5 years and younger	7	0%
6 to 17 years	261	0%
18 to 30 years	20,620	20%
31 to 40 years	22,445	22%
41 to 50 years	18,829	19%
51 to 60 years	18,347	18%
61 to 70 years	14,473	14%
71 to 80 years	5,074	5%
81 years and older	1362	1%

**Figure 3: Patients by Age Group Bar Chart**

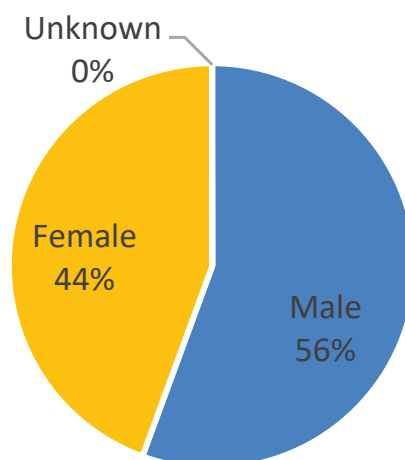


<sup>2</sup>The Age & Gender tables include Expired, Inactive and Pending Approval in addition to Active Patients

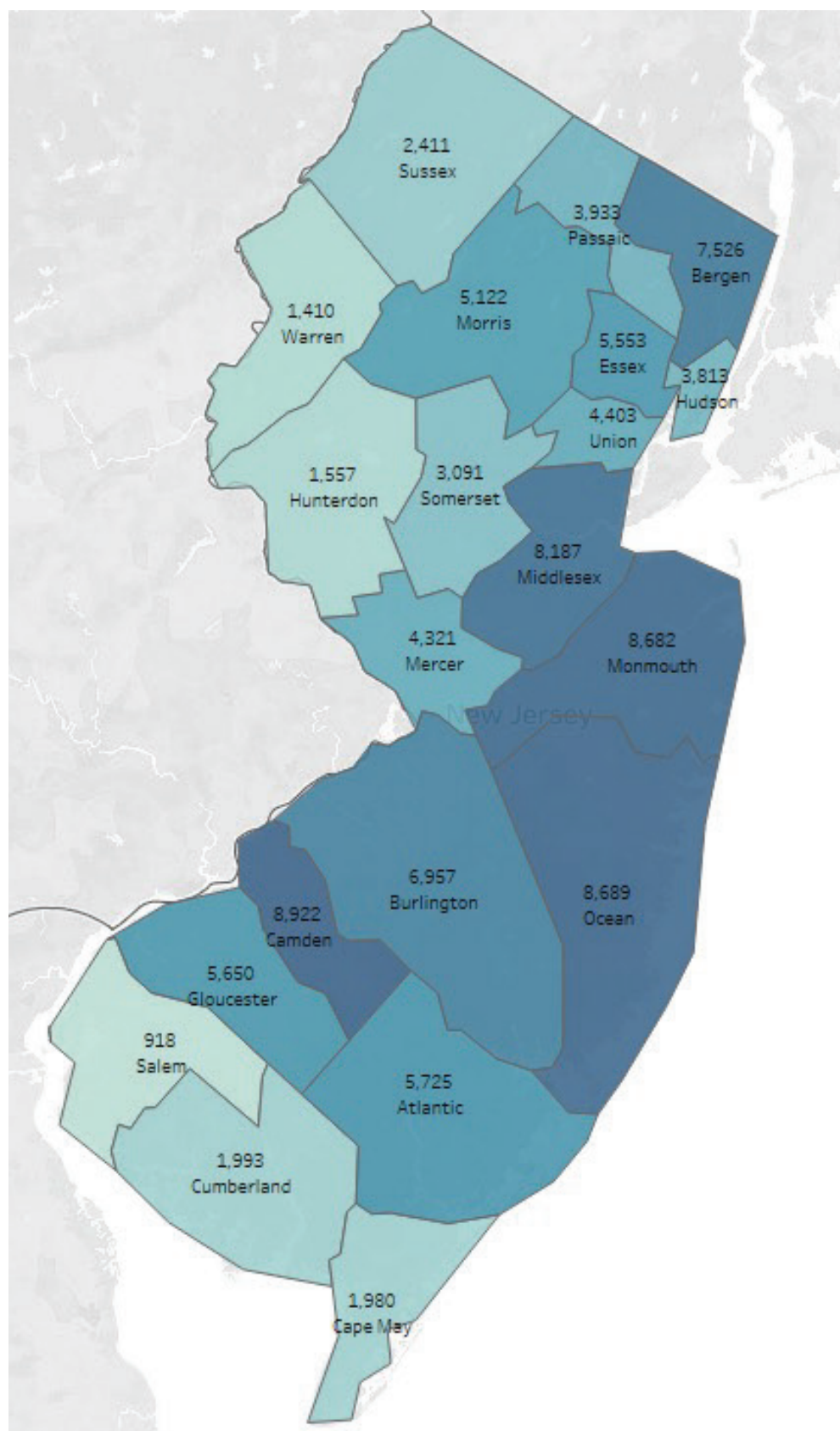
**Table 12: Patient Gender Distribution**

Patients By Gender		
Male	56,369	55.58%
Female	45,022	44.39%
Not reported	27	0.03%

**Figure 4: Patient Gender Breakdown Pie Chart**



**Figure 5: Active Patients by County**



---

**Table 12: Active Patients by County**

<b>County</b>	<b>Active Patients</b>
Atlantic	5725
Bergen	7526
Burlington	6957
Camden	8922
Cape May	1980
Cumberland	1993
Essex	5553
Gloucester	5650
Hudson	3813
Hunterdon	1557
Mercer	4321
Middlesex	8187
Monmouth	8682
Morris	5122
Ocean	8689
Passaic	3933
Salem	918
Somerset	3091
Sussex	2411
Union	4403
Warren	1410

**Figure 6: Patients by County Sorted Descending**

