



# 2023 Annual Report

on the

## **Medicinal Cannabis Program**



Adopted September 19, 2024

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# Introduction

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Calendar year 2023 was the third year the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission assumed all duties, powers, and responsibilities for oversight of medicinal cannabis activities from the New Jersey Department of Health, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 24:6I-24.

While there was an increase in the number of Alternative Treatment Centers (ATCs) and there continues to be new patients enrolling (almost 16,000), there has been a decline in the active patient rolls. The number of active patients at year's end was down 21% to 91,247, as compared to 2022. This reduction in the Medicinal Cannabis Program participation is typical of state programs upon the opening of an adult-use cannabis market.

The number of healthcare providers and caregivers, however, did not see the same decline. The number of active caregivers rose 5% over 2022 to 5,370. The program also added 105 new health care providers in 2023. The program served patients with 18 different qualifying conditions, including more than 56,000 patients suffering from anxiety.

This report details the statistics and major developments in the program for the calendar year 2023 and provides details on NJ-CRC's budget and regulatory process for cannabis activities.

## Reduction and Elimination of Patient Registration and Renewal Fees

New patients and existing patients and caregivers in the Medicinal Cannabis Program (MCP) saw renewal fees fall to just \$10 for a two-year registration, from \$50 for most registrants and \$20 for reduced fees.

## Cannabis Consumption Areas

The Commission updated its regulations to include rules for cannabis consumption areas and began taking public comment. The cannabis consumption area rules have an allowance for medicinal patients to bring in products they have purchased at another facility.

## Clinical Registrant Rule Proposal

On June 21, 2023, the NJ-CRC proposed new rules governing clinical registrants.

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## **Waiver to Offer Additional Ingestible Forms of Cannabis Products**

On September 8, 2023, the NJ-CRC issued a waiver to allow for additional ingestible products to be produced for patients by permitted medicinal cannabis manufacturers. The waiver allows for the manufacture of shelf stable (or non-TCS) food items (such as chocolates, gummies, baked goods, butters, jams, and jellies) that do not require time or temperature control to limit pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation. The waiver also permits the operators to produce beverages with no more than 5 mg of total THC per single serving.

## **Patient Survey**

A survey conducted by NJ-CRC staff in 2023 gathered 1,098 responses from the Medicinal Cannabis Program, representing a sample size large enough to make accurate inferences about the entire registered patient population. The primary concerns expressed by respondents were the high cost of cannabis, high doctor fees, frustration with the registration process with a single ATC, inconsistent product availability, lack of product variety, and the maximum monthly allotment. Additionally, the survey highlighted a lack of user familiarity and dissatisfaction with the patient registry portal, which is used to register and track patients, caregivers, and health care professionals.

Despite the noted issues, the survey also highlighted expressions of gratitude for the program, with many participants acknowledging that they have never had problems contacting the Commission's patient services. Overall, very few complaints were recorded, suggesting a generally positive sentiment from the respondents towards the NJ-CRC's Medicinal Cannabis Program.

## **Patient Registration Clinics**

In 2023, the NJ-CRC conducted patient registration clinics in Trenton, Newark, and Bridgeton as part of ongoing efforts to support New Jersey's Medicinal Cannabis Program. The pilot program, led by the agency's Patient Services Unit and Office of Diversity and Inclusion, provided services to assist patients with program registration and renewal. These services included providing guidance for new registration and renewal, offering support for required document submission, and assisting with caregiver changes, address updates, and processing payments. The approach focused on targeting areas with high patient enrollments, addressing enrollment challenges, and ensuring clinic accessibility by selecting clinic locations with access to major public transportation lines and ADA compliance.

Despite comprehensive services and support, the 2023 clinics experienced lower-than-desired turnout, having served just over a dozen patients and caregivers. Feedback about the patient registration clinics, however, was invaluable and consistent among all three locations. Patients who were served indicated that without the clinics they would have been unable to complete the necessary program registration and enrollment.

## Budget

The total budget expenditure for the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission in 2023 was \$10,716,597.49.

## Permit Issuances

In 2023 there were 22 permits issued:

**Table 1: Permit Issuances**

Operational Date (month-year)	Permit Holder	Permit Type	Municipality
January-2023	Valley Wellness	Dispensary	Raritan
February-2023	Aunt Mary's	Dispensary	Flemington
	Holistic Solutions	Dispensary	Atco
March-2023	Monmouth Wellness and Healing	Dispensary	Freehold
	Design 710	Dispensary	Atlantic City
April-2023	Restore	Dispensary	Glassboro
	MPX NJ	Dispensary	Gloucester
	Urb'n Dispensary	Dispensary	Newark
	Brute's Roots	Cultivation	Winslow Township
May-2023	Brute's Roots	Dispensary	Egg Harbor Township
	SilverLeaf Wellness	Dispensary	Somerset
	Eastern Green Dispensary	Dispensary	Voorhees
June-2023	Yuma Way	Dispensary	Garfield
July-2023	RIPT	Dispensary	Jersey City
August-2023	Downtown Flower	Dispensary	Jersey City

Operational Date (month-year)	Permit Holder	Permit Type	Municipality
August-2023	GTI (Green Thumb Industries)	Cultivator	Hacketstown
	HoneyGrove South Corp.	Dispensary	Clementon
September-2023	Garden State Botanicals	Dispensary	North Brunswick
	MPX NJ	Dispensary	Pennsauken
October-2023	Terrapin Investment Fund II	Dispensary	Hoboken
November-2023	Aunt Mary's Dispensary	Cultivator	Somerset
December-2023	Monteverde NJ	Dispensary	Red Bank
	Green Medicine NJ	Cultivator	West Amwell
	Sanctuary Cannabis	Dispensary	Scotch Plains

## Cited Violations and Revocations

Four citations were issued to expanded medicinal cannabis operators for various violations of regulatory requirements. Details for each cited violation are available on the Commission's website.

**Table 2: Cited Violations**

Date (month-year)	Business	Nature of Violation
January-2023	Acreage	Medicinal patient access violation
June-2023	TerrAscend NJ	Medicinal patient access violation
July-2023	Columbia Care	Labor peace agreement violation
	TerrAscend NJ	Medicinal patient access violation

There were no ATC permit revocations in 2023.



## Enrollment

In 2023 each ATC had the following numbers of unique patients assigned to them:

**Table 3: Alternative Treatment Center Enrollment**

Alternative Treatment Center	Assigned Patients
Ascend New Jersey	3,966
Aunt Mary's	581
Breakwater Wellness & Treatment Company	17,789
Curaleaf NJ II	44,520
Design 710	199
Ayr (GSD)	28,605
Greenleaf Compassionate Center	10,391
Harmony Foundation of New Jersey Inc.	10,284
Holistic Solutions LLC	1,144
Justice Grown New Jersey	411
MPX NJ	1,246
NJ Leaf (Monmouth Wellness & Healing LLC)	1,177
Restore NJ LLC	338
Green Thumb Industries	16,276
Sweetspot Dispensary (The Law Offices of Julianna Diaz)	1,619
TerrAscend NJ	9,345
Acreage CCF NJ	15,547
Columbia Care NJ	6,926
Valley Wellness LLC	1,429
Verano NJ	16,318

## Dispensing

In total, ATCs dispensed 453,737 ounces, or 28,359 pounds, of medicinal cannabis to registered patients in 2023.



## Program Statistics (as of December 31, 2023)

**Table 4: Patient Registration Data**

	Total	
Active Patients	91,247	
	New in 2023	Total Since Program Inception
Patients Deceased	80	8,903
First Time Patient Registrations	16,561	230,176

**Table 5: Caregiver Data**

	Total	
Active Caregivers	5,370	
	New in 2023	Total since Program Inception
Total Caregiver Registrations	1751	11,820

**Table 6: Healthcare Practitioner Registration Data**

	Total	
Active Healthcare Practitioners	1,302	
	New in 2023	Total since Program Inception
Total Healthcare Practitioner Activity	105	1,982

**Table 7: Alternative Treatment Center Investigations**

	New in 2023	Total since Program Inception
Initiated	3	38
Completed	3	33

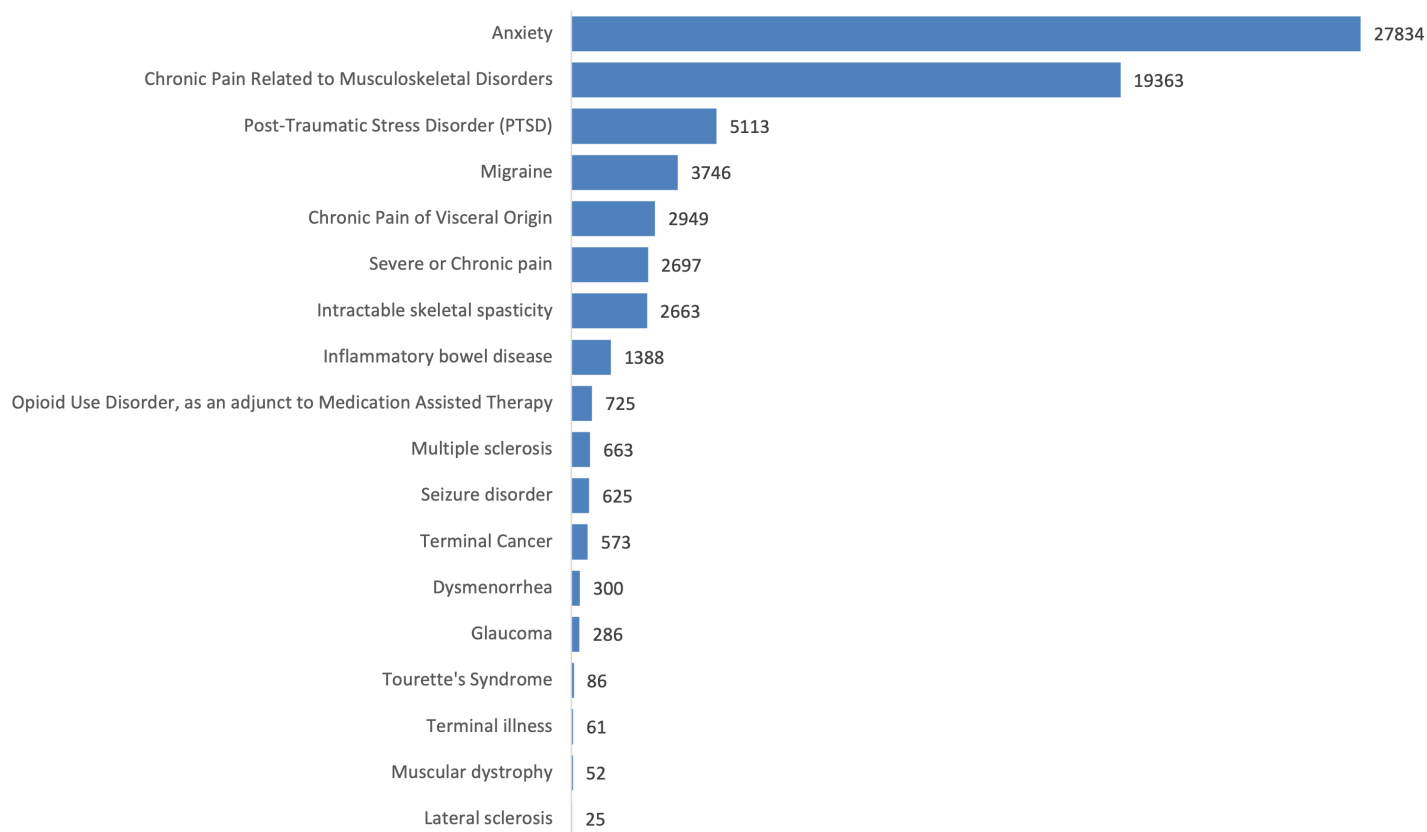
**Table 8: Alternative Treatment Center Permits**

	New in 2023	Total since Program Inception
Issued	20	50
Revoked	0	0

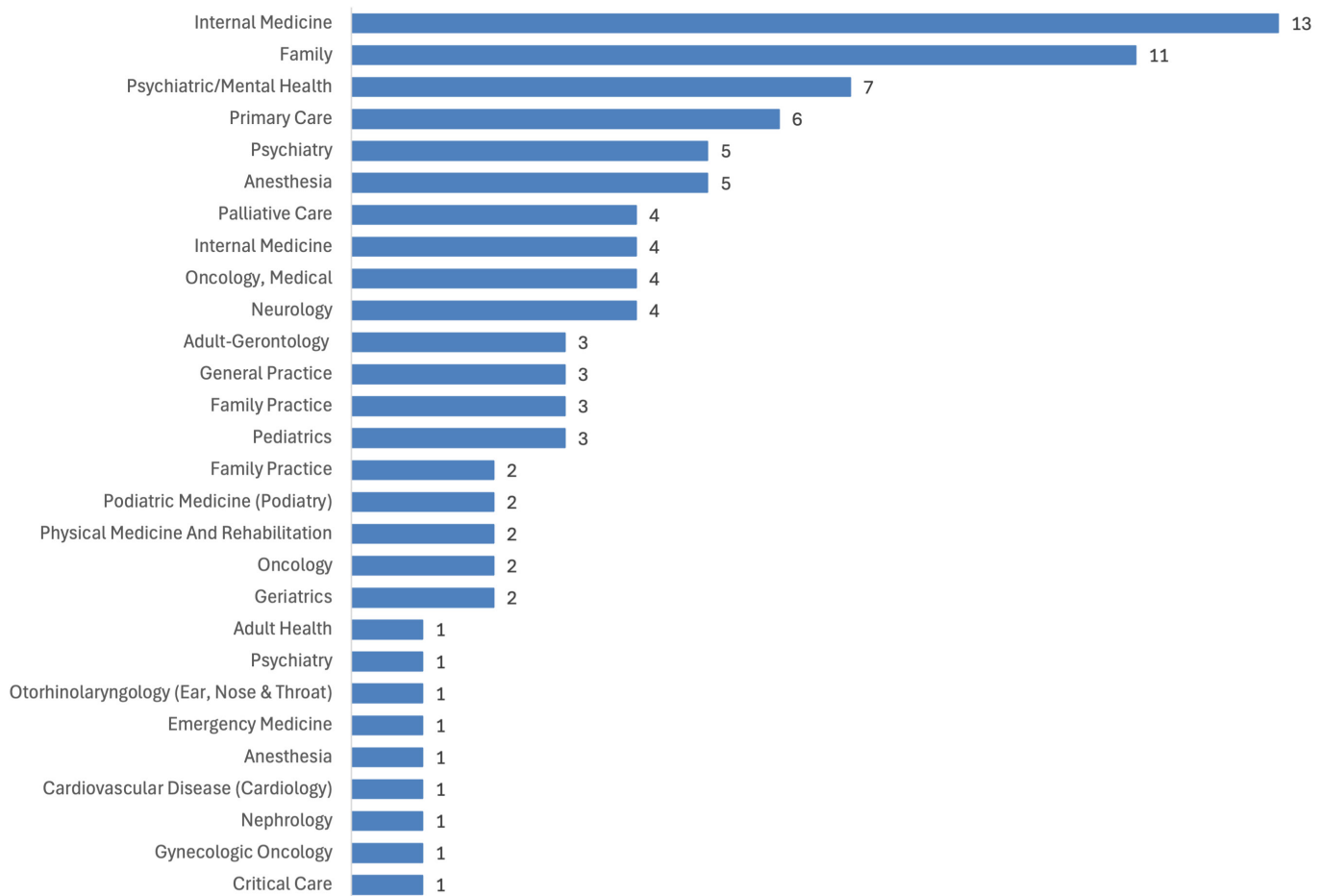
**Table 9: Nature of Patients Qualifying Conditions All Time**

Qualifying Condition	Total Patients
Anxiety	27,834
Chronic Pain of Visceral Origin	19,363
Chronic Pain Related to Musculoskeletal Disorders	2,949
Dysmenorrhea	300
Glaucoma	286
Inflammatory bowel disease	1,388
Intractable skeletal spasticity	2,663
Lateral sclerosis	25
Migraine	3,746
Multiple sclerosis	663
Muscular dystrophy	52
Opioid Use Disorder, as an adjunct to Medication	725
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	5,113
Seizure disorder	625
Severe or Chronic pain	2,697
Terminal Cancer	573
Terminal illness	61
Tourette's Syndrome	86

**Figure 1: Nature of Patients Qualifying Conditions 2023**



**Figure 2: 2023 Healthcare Providers Enrolled in Medicinal Cannabis Program, by Specialty**



**Table 10: Patients by Age Distribution**

Patients by Age <sup>1</sup>	Number	Percentage
5 years and younger	5	0%
6 to 17 years	244	0%
18 to 30 years	19230	14%
31 to 40 years	26306	21%
41 to 50 years	23425	21%
51 to 60 years	20846	18%
61 to 70 years	17851	17%
71 to 80 years	6722	7%
81 years and older	1442	1%

<sup>1</sup> The Age & Gender tables include Expired, Inactive and Pending Approval in addition to Active Patients

Table 11: Patients by Gender Distribution

Patients By Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	49,257	53%
Female	43,494	47%
Not reported	42	0%

Figure 3: Patients by Age Group Bar Chart

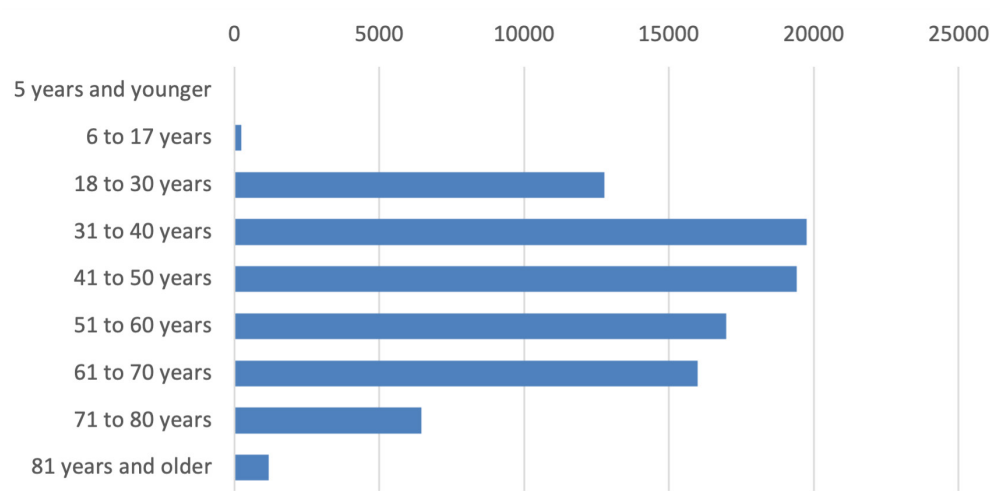
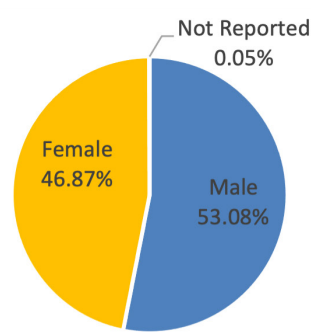
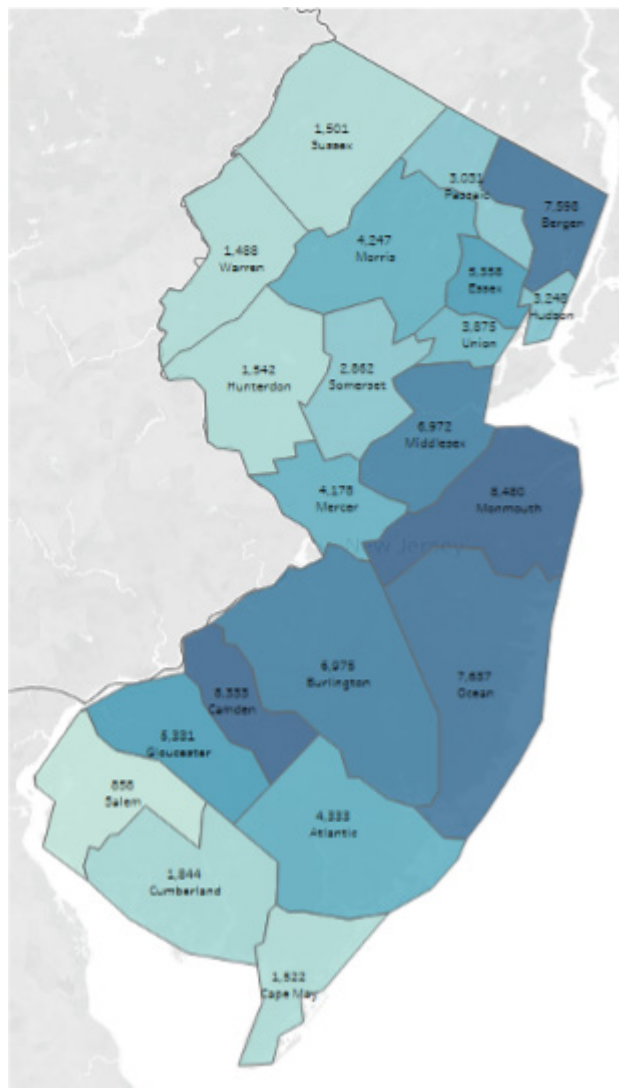


Figure 4: Patients Gender Breakdown Pie Chart



**Table 12: Active Patients by County**

County	Active Patients
Atlantic	4,178
Bergen	6,972
Burlington	7,598
Camden	8,333
Cape May	1,542
Cumberland	1,522
Essex	5,331
Gloucester	5,358
Hudson	3,248
Hunterdon	1,844
Mercer	4,247
Middlesex	6,975
Monmouth	8,480
Morris	4,333
Ocean	7,637
Passaic	2,862
Salem	858
Somerset	3,031
Sussex	1,488
Union	3,875
Warren	1,501

**Figure 5: Active Patients by County**

**Figure 6: Active Patients by County (Descending Order)**

