

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **OFFICE OF CANNABIS MANAGEMENT LAUNCHES SIX-FIGURE BILINGUAL DIGITAL AD CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM**

*Targeted Bilingual Campaign Focuses on Informing Healthcare Providers, Pharmacists and Patients about Potential Benefits of Medical Cannabis*

*Six Figure Ad Buy to Run for Six Weeks from January 8 to February 19*

*Campaign Seeks to Buck National Trends of Diminished Participation in Medical Cannabis Programs after Adult-Use Cannabis is Legalized*

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NEW YORK, NY – The New York State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) announced the launch of the State’s first medical cannabis public education campaign highlighting the potential benefits of medical cannabis and improvements to the Empire State’s Medical Cannabis Program. The digital-focused, bilingual education campaign will feature informative paid posts on social media, streaming services, and in the relevant email newsletters from key stakeholders in the program.

This campaign will have a \$160,000 ad buy, runs through February 19 and targets potential patients, caregivers, and medical practitioners: including but not limited to nurse practitioners, physicians’ assistants, medical doctors, doctors of osteopathy, medical researchers, and other healthcare personnel.

As of December 1, 2023, New York had 120,423 Registered Patients and 4,248 Certifying Healthcare Providers in the State’s medical cannabis program.

“Cannabis is medicine. While our State’s adult-use cannabis industry grows, it’s important for us to remind New Yorkers the basic fact that cannabis is still medicine,” said **Nicole Rosa, Director of Health & Safety at New York’s Office of Cannabis Management**. “This campaign features real New Yorkers: patients, health care providers, pharmacists, reminding New Yorkers of the options they have when it comes to care, and to talk to their doctors and other providers to learn if cannabis might be right for them and their needs.”

“We’re proud to launch this campaign to bring awareness to a viable treatment option that has been overlooked and stigmatized for decades. Medical cannabis research is beginning to emerge at a rapid pace, providing scientific evidence to support its use in the treatment of certain

conditions,” said **Nakesha Abel, Deputy Director for Health & Research at New York’s Office of Cannabis Management**. “In many states across the nation, the legalization of adult-use cannabis has led to a decrease in participation in medical cannabis programs. In New York, we are working to reverse this trend and hope this campaign brings to light the therapeutic benefits of medical cannabis.”

“As the chair of the Health, Safety and Research Subcommittee, I take immense pride in the New York medical cannabis program's exemplary commitment to patient safety, supported by a dedicated team of pharmacists and practitioners,” said **Dr. Junella Chin, national leader in integrative medicine serving as Vice Chair of New York’s Cannabis Advisory Board**. “Our robust measures ensure a secure and supportive environment for all patients, setting a high standard for healthcare excellence. Additionally, we just launched a statewide educational campaign to further strengthen and enhance the medical program, ensuring widespread awareness and participation in our collective commitment to health and safety.”

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The NYS Medical Cannabis Program was established in 2014 with the signing of *The Compassionate Care Act*. Eighteen months later, in January 2016, the program was implemented, affording eligible NYS residents with qualifying medical conditions the opportunity to purchase medical cannabis safely and under the supervision of certified providers. Since the NYS Medical Cannabis Program’s initial launch, the program has expanded extensively with updates designed to improve patient access and the ease of participation.

To increase accessibility to the program, the type of provider eligible to certify patients for the medical use of cannabis was broadened to include anyone who is licensed in New York State to prescribe controlled substances (including dentists, midwives, and podiatrists). Patient access to the Medical Cannabis Program was expanded further by allowing providers to certify patients for any condition they deem clinically appropriate, authorizing the sale of whole flower, and increasing the allowable dispensing limit from a 30-day supply to a 60-day supply. Additionally, the number of caregivers a certified patient may designate to assist them in obtaining, possessing, and administering medical cannabis was increased from two to five. Certified patients or designated caregivers 21 years of age or older living in New York State are also now permitted to cultivate medical cannabis in their home.

In addition to this campaign, [in September](#), The Office also opened an application window for new medical cannabis operators in New York, with the goal of increasing access across the State.

[Head here](#) to learn more about New York’s Medical Cannabis Program.

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