

February 9, 2023     Impact of HB21-1317 by the numbers:

Between January 1, 2022 and July 1, 2022, 28% of cannabis clinicians did not renew their registration within the Medical Marijuana Registry System (MMRS) at CDPHE. That's 126 providers who officially stopped caring for cannabis patients. CDPHE statistics for Jan 1, 2021 showed 439 providers registered to write cannabis recommendations. While the state stopped publishing this statistic directly on <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/medical-marijuana-registry-data> that same month, I called CDPHE and was told the December 31st, 2021 number was 427.

June 30, 2022 the number of doctors registered had dropped to 308 providers. A 28% fall. The reasons doctors give for quitting cannabis are:

1. Loss of diagnosing rights as a primary concern. The Colorado Board of Health declared at their December 2021 meeting they “could not think of a single medication or any other recommendation that would deny the doctor the right to diagnose their own patient. The Board of Health made strong objections to the law, but were ignored by the AG’s office.
2. Having to write a full prescription – both illegal and impossible. Even with nearly 40,000 studies on cannabis on PubMed.gov, there remains **no known correlation between any given dose of cannabis and any blood level or effect in a person.** We provide our patients with a booklet that explains different forms of cannabis, how to get started, and how to adjust the dose.

After the law went into effect, 16,004 patients lost care between September 30, 2021 and September 30, 2022. This is a combination of both doctor loss and loss of telemedicine. Patients outside of Denver are now forced to drive long distances while ill to see us. Some drive 4 or 5 hours.

Do the patients who can no longer find a cannabis clinician still have chronic medical conditions? Yes. Are they still using cannabis? Yes. But now they are doing it with no medical oversight whatsoever, and paying 30-50% taxes. Our doctors want patients who can to see us in person to continue to do so, but allow telemedicine for patients who are Homebound, under age 18, over age 65, or who live in a area with few or no practicing cannabis providers.

I do not have numbers on how many medical dispensaries have closed, but I'm sure it's in the dozens. You'll have to call the MED for those numbers.

Data from CDPHE is attached.

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Cannabis Clinicians Colorado