

THE WEEK'S TOP STORIES

TWO QUALIFYING CONDITIONS ADDED FOR MINNESOTA'S MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM

Autism spectrum disorders and obstructive sleep apnea have been added as qualifying conditions for the state's medical cannabis program.

"Any policy decisions about cannabis are difficult due to the relative lack of published scientific evidence," said Ed Ehlinger, MD, Minnesota commissioner of health. "However, there is increasing evidence for potential benefits of medical cannabis for those with severe autism and obstructive sleep apnea."

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) conducted a formal petition to get public input on potential qualifying conditions to add. A total of 10 conditions were put forward this year after a process of public comments, a citizens' review panel, and a set of research summaries for each condition were prepared by MDH staff. These included anxiety disorders, autism, cortico-basal degeneration, dementia, endogenous cannabinoid deficiency syndrome, liver disease, nausea, obstructive sleep apnea, Parkinson's disease, and peripheral neuropathy. There were also petitions to add cannabis delivery methods including infused edibles and vaporizing or smoking cannabis flowers, however those requests were not approved.

MDH's research brief showed a growing body of research indicating that the human body's endocannabinoid system may play a role in autism symptoms. The review panel noted the lack of effective drug treatments available, the potentially severe side effects of current drug treatments, and anecdotal evidence of Minnesota children with autism already receiving benefits from medical cannabis taken for other qualifying conditions. Patients who get certified for the program because of autism must meet the DSM-5 for autism.

The review panel and MDH's research brief also identified some scientific evidence of effectiveness of cannabis treatments for obstructive sleep apnea. Patients certified for the program because of this must meet published diagnostic criteria for the conditions including interpretation of a formal sleep study.

NEWS IN BRIEF

PATIENT TRANSPORTATION VOUCHERS HELP PATIENTS IN NEED IN OWATONNA

Owatonna Hospital Foundation is offering vouchers to assist patients in paying for transportation after they leave the hospital as part of a new pilot program.

"We understand that transportation can be a barrier," said Elizabeth Keck, In-Reach Program care coordinator at Owatonna Hospital. "We want individuals to be able to get the care they need, without having to worry about how they might get home afterwards."

More than \$4,000 in funding was approved for the pilot program after Owatonna Hospital spent several thousand dollars on taxis and bus tickets for patients in 2016, costs that were assumed by the foundation and its donors. Medical Assistance covers some of those costs if the patient is going to a clinic appointment, but a ride home from the hospital does not qualify.

"To assist in getting patients home, it can cost upwards of \$300 if they live outside city limits," said Keck. "This can create additional unneeded stress and anxiety; plus, those who have mental health

Published every Monday, MEDFAX is copyrighted by Minnesota Physician Publishing Inc., and is transmitted solely to the subscriber. Any unauthorized copying, duplication, or retransmission is strictly prohibited under U.S. Copyright laws. Editor: Amanda Marlow
To subscribe, please call (612) 728-8600.



The additions will bring the number of qualifying conditions to 13. Patients who will be eligible for the medical cannabis program with the addition of these conditions will be able to enroll on July 1, 2018 and begin receiving cannabis from the state's two medical cannabis manufacturers beginning Aug. 1.

FRANCISCAN SISTERS TRANSFERRING OVERSIGHT OF HOSPITAL TO MAYO

The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA) will transfer complete oversight of Mayo Clinic Health System–Franciscan Healthcare and Viterbo University in La-Crosse, Wisc., and St. Anthony Regional Hospital & Nursing Home in Carroll, Iowa, to lay leaders for each organization. This removes FSPA from sponsorship of the ministries.

Viterbo University and St. Anthony Regional Hospital & Nursing Home will continue with their Catholic identities, however Mayo Clinic–Franciscan Healthcare will be fully transitioned to Mayo Clinic Health System and become a faith-based, non-Catholic organization. FSPA will shift its focus to social justice issues.

“We recognize these organizations are well staffed, well led, and have a solid foundation for the future,” said Sister Helen Elsbernd, FSPA vice president. “We know the leaders will make the decisions they see fit in order to provide quality education and health care in the Coulee Region and Carroll, Iowa, and the surrounding communities. We also recognize that as our demographics change, we must honor the focus of our sisters in ministry today—sisters who are being called to address the social justice issues now facing our society.”

FSPA and representatives from each organization are working with LaCrosse Diocese Bishop Callahan and Sioux City Diocese Bishop Nickless to complete the transition plans. The goal for completion is July 1, 2018. Next steps include preparing requests for Vatican approval of the intended sponsorship transfer.

“FSPA is actively collaborating with partners who are innovating to care for the environment, eliminate the homelessness crisis, and modern-day slavery, work with our broken immigration system, and provide spiritual havens for those seeking wholeness,” said Karen Lueck, FSPA president. “Entrusting full responsibility of Mayo Clinic Health System–Franciscan Healthcare, Viterbo University, and St. Anthony Regional Hospital & Nursing Home to our lay partners allows FSPA to serve where today's needs are greatest.”

The amount of money FSPA will receive from Mayo Clinic Health System has not yet been determined. The organizations are working out details under the pact they signed when they became partners in 1995.

VIRTUAL REALITY IMPROVES WELL-BEING FOR SENIORS

A recent study from Ebenezer, the senior services arm of Fairview Health Services, has shown that virtual reality technology helps seniors reduce stress and improve their well-being.

issues or just had a procedure can be put in vulnerable or unsafe situations, when they don't have transportation lined up.”

The foundation is working with local transportation providers to have them begin accepting vouchers as payment and invoice them for the actual costs after the fact, according to Natalie Ginter, director of Owatonna Hospital Foundation.

PLYMOUTH RAISES TOBACCO SALE AGE TO 21

The Plymouth City Council has voted to raise the minimum tobacco sale age from 18 to 21. Plymouth joins Edina, St. Louis Park, and Bloomington in implementing the policy in Minnesota, as well as five states and more than 270 communities across the U.S.


“Plymouth city leaders took bold action to prevent young people from ever getting hooked on tobacco products. The City Council showed true leadership, making a decision in the best interest of their constituents, and not bowing to tobacco industry pressure,” said Molly Moilanen, director of public affairs at ClearWay Minnesota and co-chair of the Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation coalition. “Raising the tobacco age to 21 is a life-saving policy. It will help keep more of today's young people from suffering the addiction, disease, and premature death caused by tobacco.”

RIVERWOOD RECOGNIZED FOR CERTIFICATION OF SURGERY NURSES

Riverwood Healthcare Center has earned the CNOR Strong designation

**Lending to
small
businesses
is a #1 priority for us**

usbank.com

 All applications are subject to normal credit approval. Call your business banking expert for current rates and terms. Standard fees apply. Refinance of existing U.S. Bank business loans are excluded. Member FDIC.

To help you succeed, we've developed a variety of flexible business solutions designed to keep cash flowing and businesses growing. And, it's backed by the expertise and stability of one of America's strongest banks.

• Working Capital Lines of Credit • Owner & Investment Real Estate • Cash Management Solutions • Payment Solutions

Visit your local U.S. Bank today!

Ehren McGeehan *Twin Cities West* (651) 604-1622

All of  serving you®



The study engaged patients in seven to 11 minutes of virtual reality content twice a week for four weeks. These experiences included scenes of nature, travel, and entertainment performances.

Participants completed an assessment measuring their well-being before and after the virtual reality sessions—100 percent reported that they enjoyed the experience; 96 percent felt a greater sense of happiness; 97 percent reported feeling more relaxed; and 98 percent reported feeling more positive. In addition, 94 percent reported feeling less worried after the experience.

Ebenezer is now working to incorporate virtual reality technology into its Life Long Learning program, a collection of coordinated arts and education programs designed to foster growth and creativity for seniors.

“We are just scratching the surface of what virtual reality technology can do to help the individuals we serve at Ebenezer,” said Joel Prevost, director of Ebenezer’s Minneapolis campus. “For those diagnosed with anxiety and depression, it can help alleviate some of their effects.”

MAYO ALUMNI HONORED BY RADIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

William Charboneau, MD, emeritus professor of radiology at Mayo Clinic, received the 2017 Gold Medal from the Radiological Society of North America at its 103rd Scientific Assembly and Annual Meeting in Chicago.

The board of directors selects gold medal winners, and they must receive a unanimous vote. It is awarded to individuals who have rendered unusual services to the science of radiology. Charboneau was recognized for being a leading authority in diagnostic ultrasound and a pioneer in image-guided treatment of cancers of liver, kidney, lung, and bone.

“He is a world-renowned clinician, educator, and visionary who helped translate many advanced applications of imaging and intervention,” said Richard Ehman, MD, diagnostic radiologist at Mayo Clinic and current president of the Radiological Society of North America board of directors. “His innovations, leadership, and advocacy were instrumental in the development of image-guided percutaneous tumor ablation treatment, which has had a profound impact on patients worldwide.”

Charboneau’s clinical expertise and extensive research also led to the publication of a reference book on ultrasound imaging, *Diagnostic Ultrasound*. He and his fellow editors worked with more than 100 authors from around the world to finalize the book, which is now in its fifth edition. In addition to this seminal work, he also authored more than 175 scientific publications and he is co-editor of several other textbooks. He earned his medical degree at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and completed his radiology residency at Mayo Clinic. He began his career in the radiology department at Mayo Clinic and practiced there for 30 years, until his retirement in 2010.

from the Competency & Credentialing Institute. To earn the designation, a facility must have at least 50 percent of its perioperative nurses on the surgical nursing staff CNOR certified and provide programs that reward and recognize its certified nurses. Riverwood now has a total of six perioperative nurses with the certification.

According to the institute, research shows that nurses who earn the CNOR credential have greater confidence in their clinical practice, having validated their specialized knowledge in perioperative nursing, therefore a team of CNOR certified nurses furthers a culture of professionalism and has been correlated to improved outcomes in surgical patients.

U OF M NAMES NEW FAMILY MEDICINE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT HEAD

James Pacala, MD, MS, has been named the new head of the University of Minnesota’s department of family medicine and community health.

Pacala is a board-certified family physician and geriatrician who currently serves as a professor and associate head in the department. He has performed research and published extensively on models of care delivery to geriatric populations and innovative teaching methods. He is a past president of the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) and is co-author of the AGS practice handbook, *Geriatrics At Your Fingertips*. He earned his medical degree at the University of Rochester and his master’s degree at Brown University.

48TH
SESSION



REGENERATIVE MEDICINE:

Efficacy, Economics, and Evolution

Tuesday, December 12, 2017, 1-4 pm

The Gallery, Downtown Minneapolis Hilton and Towers

