



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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January 17, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Directors and Health Officer

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MEDICAL MARIJUANA ID CARD PROGRAM

On May 23, 2006 the Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance amending the Los Angeles County Code, Title 11 to allow the County health officer to accept applications for Medical Marijuana Program identification cards and charge an application fee to cover County costs in administering the State's program. The ordinance became effective on June 22, 2006. On May 29, 2007, the Board approved an ordinance to amend the County Code to implement a new State application fee and change the Code so that subsequent State fee changes may be automatically implemented. On October 22, 2007, I provided you with a report on the implementation of the State-mandated Medical Marijuana Identification Card Program (MMIP) in Los Angeles County. This is an update on MMIP status after six months of operation.

**Background**

On June 1, 2007 the Los Angeles County MMIP began scheduling appointments, which were available beginning July 2, 2007, to eligible patients and caregivers wishing to apply for a medical marijuana identification card. To facilitate appointment scheduling, a toll-free number was established for individuals calling from within Los Angeles County. MMIP application appointments take place in the first floor lobby of the Central Health Center located at 241 N. Figueroa Street. The application fee for medical marijuana ID cards is \$153 (\$66 State fee and \$87 County fee). For Medi-Cal recipients the fee is \$76.50 (\$33 State fee and \$43.50 County fee).

This ID card program does not include any regulation or oversight of the dispensaries at which the ID cards may be used.

**Program Workload, Budget and Staffing Needs**

Since implementation, the MMIP has experienced a significantly lower demand for services than originally anticipated. The table below summarizes MMIP applications processed and cards issued during the first six months of operation. The MMIP handles both walk-in applicants and appointments.

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Total Number of Applications Processed</b>	<b>Number of Cards Issued</b>
7/1/07 – 7/31/07	58	32
8/1/07 – 8/31/07	72	77
9/1/07 – 9/30/07	28	31
10/1/07 – 10/31/07	20	30
11/1/07 – 11/30/07	18	17
12/1/07 – 12/31/07	12	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>200</b>

The original budget and staffing for the program were designed based on a workload of 250 applications per month. Because demand for this service is significantly lower than this estimate, the Department has adjusted program operations and staffing to more closely match demand.

As of January 1, 2008, MMIP has changed its operating hours to Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The program was originally designed with a staff of three. The program currently has one full time employee and one loaned staff from the Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology (OHAE). Since the MMIP will only be open three days a week, the full time employee and the loaned staff will be assisting with administrative duties within the OHAE on the other two days of the week.

As the MMIP develops, the Department will continue to evaluate program operations, budget and staffing.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

JEF:sjk  
PH:506:004(2)

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors