



# Medical Cannabis Program Update

APRIL 2020

Minnesota's medical cannabis program began distributing medical cannabis to registered patients on July 1, 2015. This update reports information collected from July 1, 2015, through March 31, 2020. The data for this update, unless otherwise noted, come from the medical cannabis patient registry system, a secure, web-based application system. This document is updated quarterly.

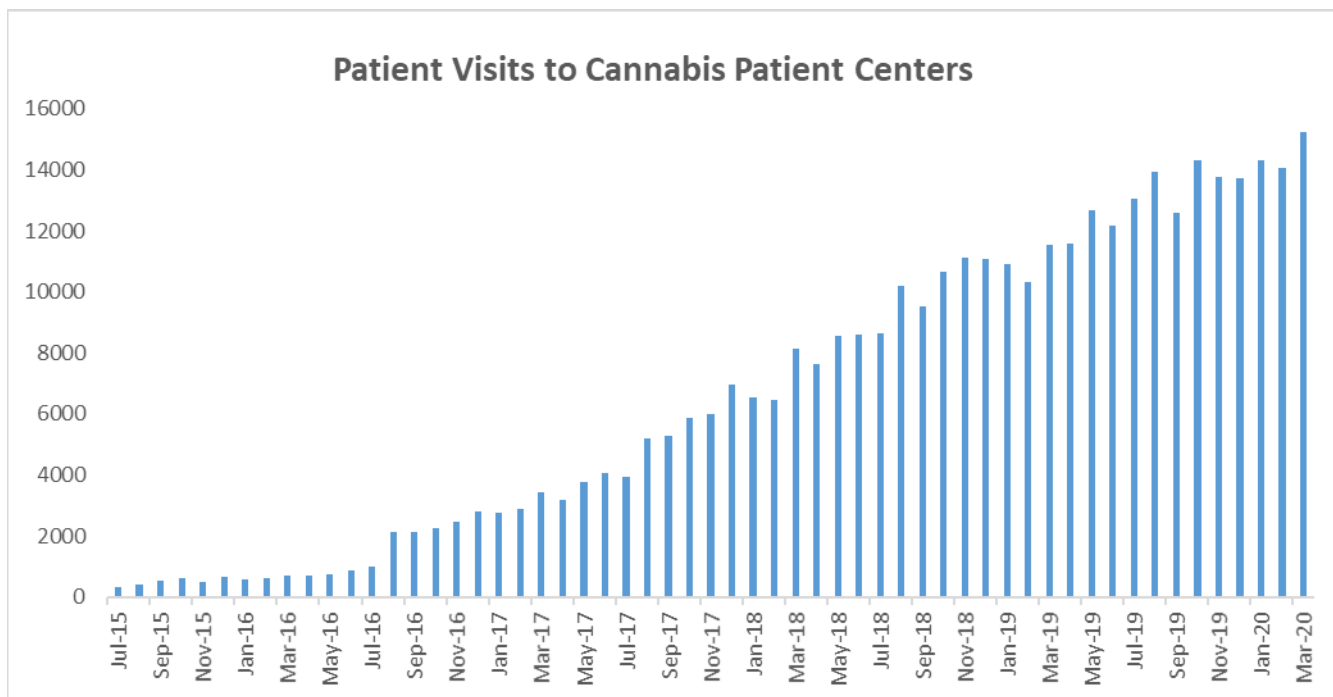
## Cannabis Manufacturers

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) registered two medical cannabis manufacturers on Dec. 1, 2014. They are responsible for the cultivation, production, and distribution of medical cannabis in the state. The manufacturers are Minnesota Medical Solutions, LLC and LeafLine Labs, LLC.

- Minnesota Medical Solutions operates distribution facilities, or Cannabis Patient Centers (CPCs), in Minneapolis, Rochester, Moorhead, and Bloomington.
- LeafLine Labs operates CPCs in Eagan, St. Cloud, Hibbing, and St. Paul.

Under legislation effective on July 1, 2019, each manufacturer will be required to open four more CPCs. The locations proposed by the manufacturers are Willmar, Mankato, Golden Valley, Champlin, Woodbury, Blaine, Duluth, and Burnsville.

Figure 1 displays the total number of patient visits to a CPC that resulted in medical cannabis purchases between July 1, 2015, and March 31, 2020. Each visit may have resulted in the purchase of multiple products and variable quantities; additionally, patients may have made several purchase visits during this time period. Only the number of total CPC visits is reflected in this figure.

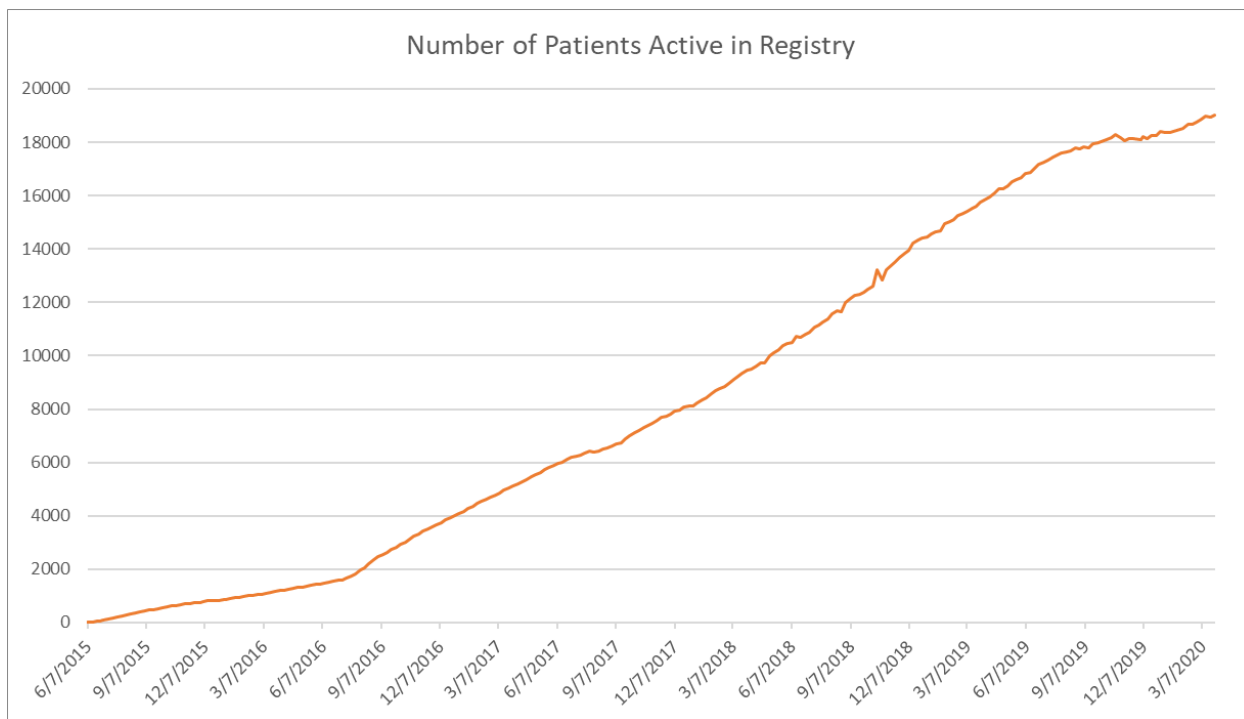


**Figure 1. Total number of patient visits to a Cannabis Patient Center that resulted in purchase of medical cannabis products, by month.**

## Patients

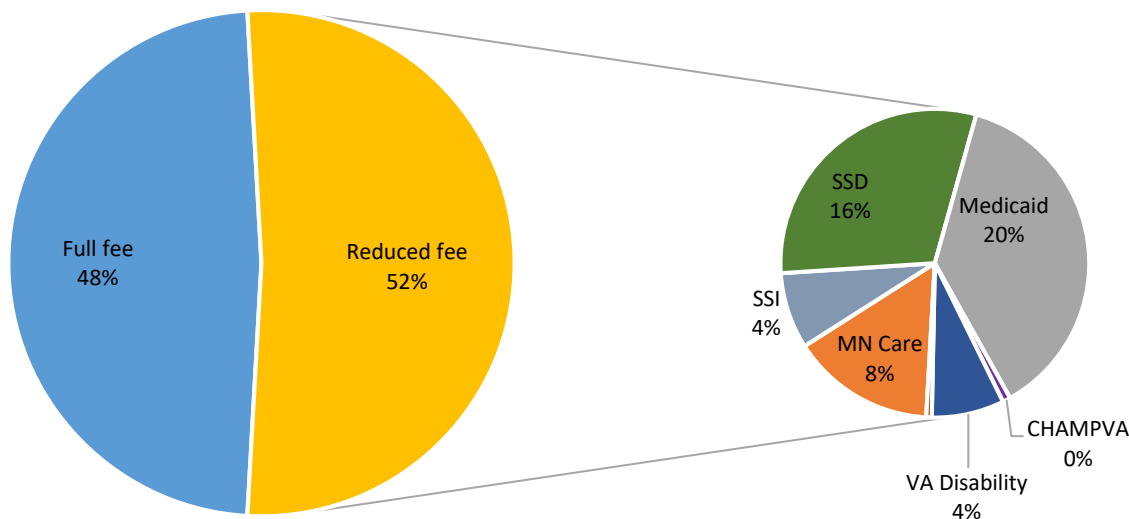
Qualifying patients must be enrolled in the medical cannabis patient registry to be eligible to legally purchase and possess medical cannabis. As part of the application process, a patient’s qualifying medical condition must be certified by a health care practitioner; this qualifying medical condition and the patient must be re-evaluated and re-certified by a health care practitioner every year.

Figure 2 displays the weekly number of patients enrolled and in active status in the registry. As of March 31, 2020, there were 19,075 patients actively enrolled in the patient registry, an increase of 20% (or 3,208) above the 15,867 who were enrolled as of March 31, 2019.



**Figure 2. Weekly number of patients enrolled and in active status in registry, as of March 31, 2020.**

Patients must pay an enrollment fee before they are eligible to legally purchase and possess medical cannabis. Minnesota Statutes, Section 152.35 sets the annual patient enrollment fee at \$200; patients who receive medical assistance, such as Minnesota Care (MN Care), Social Security Disability (SSD), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid/Medical Assistance (MA) and CHAMPVA, qualify for a reduced fee of \$50. Figure 3 shows that 52% of patients registered as of March 31, 2020, qualified for the reduced enrollment fee.



**Figure 3. Breakdown of active patients by fee type (reduced vs. full fee) and types of government assistance for reduced fees, as of March 31, 2020.**

The medical conditions that qualify a patient for the medical cannabis program are:

- Cancer or its treatment (must be accompanied by severe or chronic pain, nausea , or severe wasting)
- Glaucoma
- HIV/AIDS
- Tourette Syndrome
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig’s Disease)
- Seizures, including those characteristic of epilepsy
- Severe and persistent muscle spasms, including those characteristic of multiple sclerosis
- Terminal Illness with life-expectancy of less than 1 year (must be accompanied by severe or chronic pain, nausea, or severe wasting)
- Crohn’s Disease was extended to Inflammatory Bowel Disease (including Crohn’s Disease) effective July 1, 2016.

The Commissioner of Health has added the following qualifying medical conditions:

- Intractable Pain, effective Aug. 1, 2016
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), effective Aug. 1, 2017
- Autism Spectrum Disorder, effective Aug. 1, 2018
- Obstructive Sleep Apnea, effective Aug. 1, 2018
- Alzheimer’s Disease, effective Aug. 1, 2019.

The Commissioner has also added Chronic Pain and Age-Related Macular Degeneration as qualifying conditions, to be effective Aug. 1, 2020.

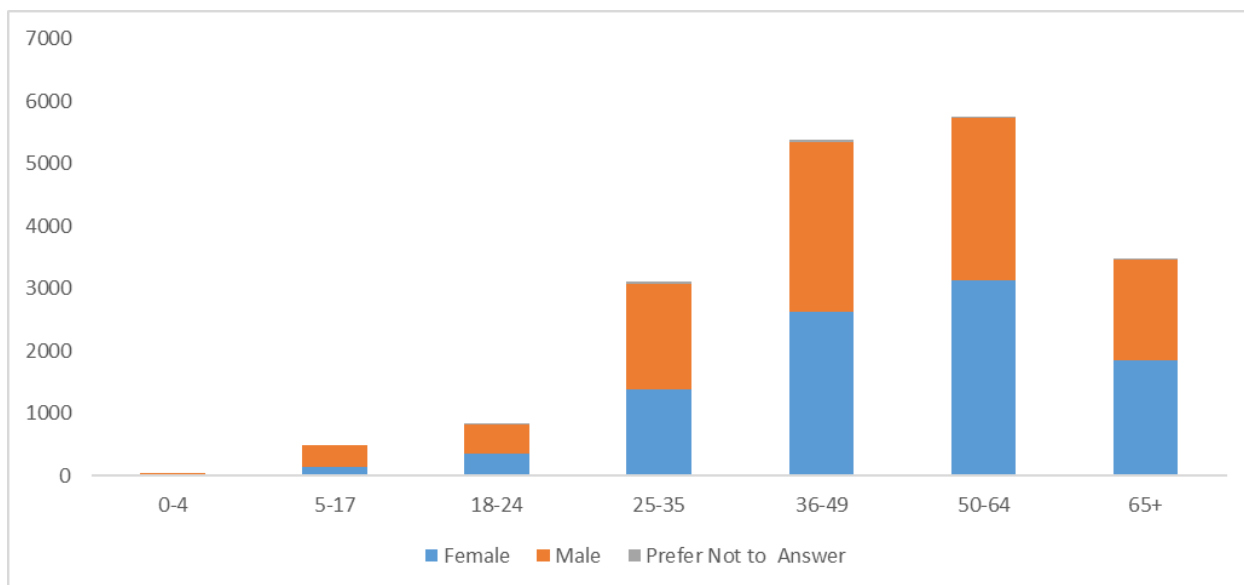
Table 1 shows the number of active patients in the patient registry who have been certified as having that qualifying medical condition. As of March 31, 2020, the three most frequently certified qualifying medical conditions are (1) intractable pain, (2) PTSD, and (3) severe and persistent muscle spasms, including those characteristic of multiple sclerosis.

**Table 1: Count (%) of Active Patients by Condition\* as of March 31, 2020**

Qualifying Condition	Patients Certified: N (%)
Glaucoma	142 (1%)
HIV/AIDS	106 (1%)
Tourette Syndrome	115 (1%)
ALS	35 (<1%)
Seizures	615 (3%)
Severe and Persistent Muscle Spasms	2,304 (13%)
Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Including Crohn's Disease	554 (3%)
Cancer	1341 (7%)
Terminal Illness	125 (1%)
Intractable Pain	12,377 (65%)
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	4,051 (21%)
Autism Spectrum Disorder	504 (3%)
Obstructive Sleep Apnea	960 (5%)
Alzheimer's Disease	31 (<1%)
Total	19,075

*\*Patients certified total more than 100% because 16.2% of the 18,249 patients are currently certified for more than one condition; this table counts each certified condition.*

Figure 4 displays the number of active patients by age and gender. The average age of registered patients is 48.6 years; however, the average age varies by qualifying medical condition.



**Figure 4. Breakdown of active patients by age and gender, as of March 31, 2020.**

Table 2 demonstrates the breakdown of active, condition-specific patient counts by age. Patients certified as having Autism Spectrum Disorder have the lowest average age of 18.3 years; patients with Alzheimer’s disease have the highest average age of 75.1 years.

**Table 2: Breakdown of Active Patients by Age Group and Qualifying Medical Condition, as of March 31, 2020.**

Age (y)	0-4	5-17	18-24	25-35	36-49	50-64	65+	Mean Age (SD)
<i>All Conditions</i>	40 (<1%)	491 (3%)	817 (4%)	3,104 (16%)	5,384 (28%)	5,762 (30%)	3,477 (18%)	48.6 (16.7)
<i>Glaucoma</i>	-	1 (1%)	2 (1%)	11 (8%)	17 (12%)	52 (37%)	52 (37%)	59.1 (14.8)
<i>HIV/AIDS</i>	-	-	3 (3%)	26 (25%)	35 (33%)	37 (35%)	5 (5%)	45.0 (12.0)
<i>Tourette Syndrome</i>	-	25 (22%)	31 (27%)	28 (24%)	19 (17%)	6 (5%)	6 (5%)	28.6 (15.5)
<i>ALS</i>	-	-	-	-	5 (14%)	18 (51%)	12 (34%)	59.7 (10.2)
<i>Seizures</i>	18 (3%)	108 (18%)	87 (14%)	163 (27%)	149 (24%)	60 (10%)	30 (5%)	32.1 (16.7)
<i>Muscle Spasms</i>	2 (<1%)	13 (1%)	93 (4%)	411 (18%)	741 (32%)	751 (33%)	293 (13%)	47.6 (14.5)

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Age (y)	0-4	5-17	18-24	25-35	36-49	50-64	65+	Mean Age (SD)
<i>Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Including Crohn's Disease</i>	-	3 (1%)	28 (5%)	114 (21%)	208 (38%)	152 (27%)	49 (9%)	44.8 (13.9)
<i>Cancer</i>	8 (1%)	20 (2%)	15 (1%)	65 (5%)	222 (17%)	522 (39%)	489 (37%)	57.9 (15.4)
<i>Terminal Illness</i>	2 (2%)	3 (2%)	5 (4%)	5 (4%)	14 (11%)	39 (31%)	57 (46%)	59.4 (20.0)
<i>Intractable Pain</i>	2 (<1%)	34 (<1%)	306 (3%)	1,626 (13%)	3,505 (28%)	4,269 (35%)	2,635 (21%)	51.9 (15.2)
<i>PTSD</i>	-	54 (1%)	351 (9%)	1324 (33%)	1421 (35%)	684 (17%)	217 (5%)	39.7 (13.1)
<i>Autism Spectrum Disorder</i>	12 (2%)		283 (56%)	93 (19%)	67 (13%)	42 (8%)	5 (1%)	18.3 (11.1)
<i>Obstructive Sleep Apnea</i>	-	1 (<1%)	7 (1%)	86 (9%)	351 (37%)	369 (38%)	146 (15%)	51.1 (12.2)
<i>Alzheimer's Disease</i>	-	-	-	-	-	4 (13%)	27 (87%)	75.1 (9.2)

Table 3 indicates the majority of enrolled patients come from or near the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. Only 14% of enrolled patients come from the northern tier (defined as the Duluth, Brainerd, Bemidji, Detroit Lakes, and East Grand Forks ZIP code regions listed in Table 4). Eleven percent come from Southern Minnesota (defined as the Rochester, Mankato, Willmar postal codes). Sixty-eight percent of enrolled patients come from the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. The remaining 6% come from the St. Cloud region.

**Table 3. Approved and active patients, by ZIP code region as of March 31, 2020**

Region	ZIP Codes	Active Patients
St Paul	55000-55199	5,491
Minneapolis	55300-55599	7,548
Duluth	55600-55899	1,120
Rochester	55900-55999	964
Mankato	56000-56199	651
Willmar	56200-56299	546
St Cloud	56300-56399	1,191
Brainerd	56400-56499	630
Detroit Lakes	56500-56599	501

Region	ZIP Codes	Active Patients
Bemidji	56600-56699	275
E Grand Forks	56700-56799	149

## Caregivers

Patients who require extra help can use their registry account to invite caregivers to assist them in picking up medical cannabis from a Cannabis Patient Center or in administering the medical cannabis. There are two different groups of caregivers in the Minnesota medical cannabis program: designated caregivers and parents, legal guardians, or spouses acting as caregivers. All caregivers must be enrolled in the patient registry system. A patient’s parent, legal guardian, or spouse may act as caregiver and be entered in the registry without having to qualify as a designated caregiver. A patient may have both registered designated caregivers and registered parents, legal guardians, or spouse acting as caregivers.

The law permits a patient to have a registered designated caregiver only if the patient’s health care practitioner certifies that the patient requires assistance in administering medical cannabis or obtaining medical cannabis from a CPC. Registered designated caregivers must pass a criminal background check.

Table 4 displays the number of patients with registered designated caregivers or registered parents/legal guardians/spouses, by qualifying medical condition, as of March 31, 2020. Prior to July 1, 2019, a patient’s spouse was required to qualify as a designated caregiver in order to register in the program. Under legislation which became effective July 1, 2019, a patient’s spouse is no longer required to register as a designated caregiver. Therefore, the significant number of caregivers who are spouses of patients may still be registered as designated caregivers rather than parents/legal guardians/spouses and would be represented in the middle column of Table 4.

**Table 4: Active Designated Caregivers and/or Registered Parents/Legal Guardians/Spouses (PLGS) by Condition\* as of March 31, 2020**

Qualifying Condition	Total Patients	Patient with Registered Caregivers: N (%)	Patients with Registered PLGS: N (%)	Patients with Caregiver and/or PLGS: N (%)
Glaucoma	142	14 (10%)	6 (4%)	20 (14%)
HIV/AIDS	106	3 (3%)	-	3 (3%)
Tourette Syndrome	115	6 (5%)	50 (43%)	52 (45%)
ALS	35	12 (34%)	9 (26%)	21 (60%)
Seizures	615	44 (7%)	265 (43%)	293 (48%)



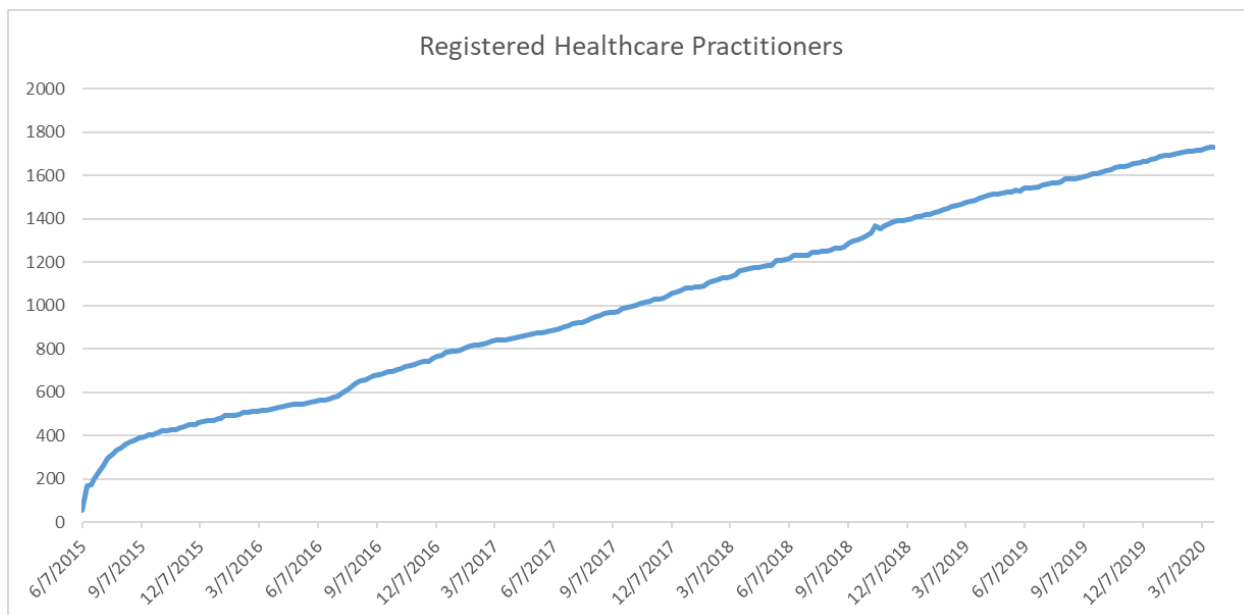
Qualifying Condition	Total Patients	Patient with Registered Caregivers: N (%)	Patients with Registered PLGS: N (%)	Patients with Caregiver and/or PLGS: N (%)
Severe and Persistent Muscle Spasms	2,304	221 (10%)	143 (6%)	354 (15%)
Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Including Crohn's Disease	554	28 (5%)	33 (6%)	61 (11%)
Cancer	1,341	211 (16%)	217 (16%)	421 (31%)
Terminal Illness	125	36 (29%)	18 (14%)	52 (42%)
Intractable Pain	12,377	802 (7%)	659 (5%)	1,451 (12%)
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	4,051	107 (3%)	214 (5%)	314 (8%)
Autism Spectrum Disorder	504	34 (7%)	29 (6%)	63 (13%)
Obstructive Sleep Apnea	960	25 (3%)	420 (44%)	424 (44%)
Alzheimer's Disease	31	12 (39%)	13 (42%)	24 (77%)
Total	19,075	1,195 (6%)	1,772 (9%)	2,904 (15%)

\*A designated caregiver is limited to caring for one patient at a time, unless the patients live at the same address.

## Health Care Practitioners

Health care practitioners who can certify a patient's qualifying medical condition are Minnesota licensed physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs). The health care practitioner must be enrolled in the medical cannabis registry before certifying a patient's qualifying medical condition.

As can be seen in Figure 5, the number of health care practitioners registering with the program continues to increase.

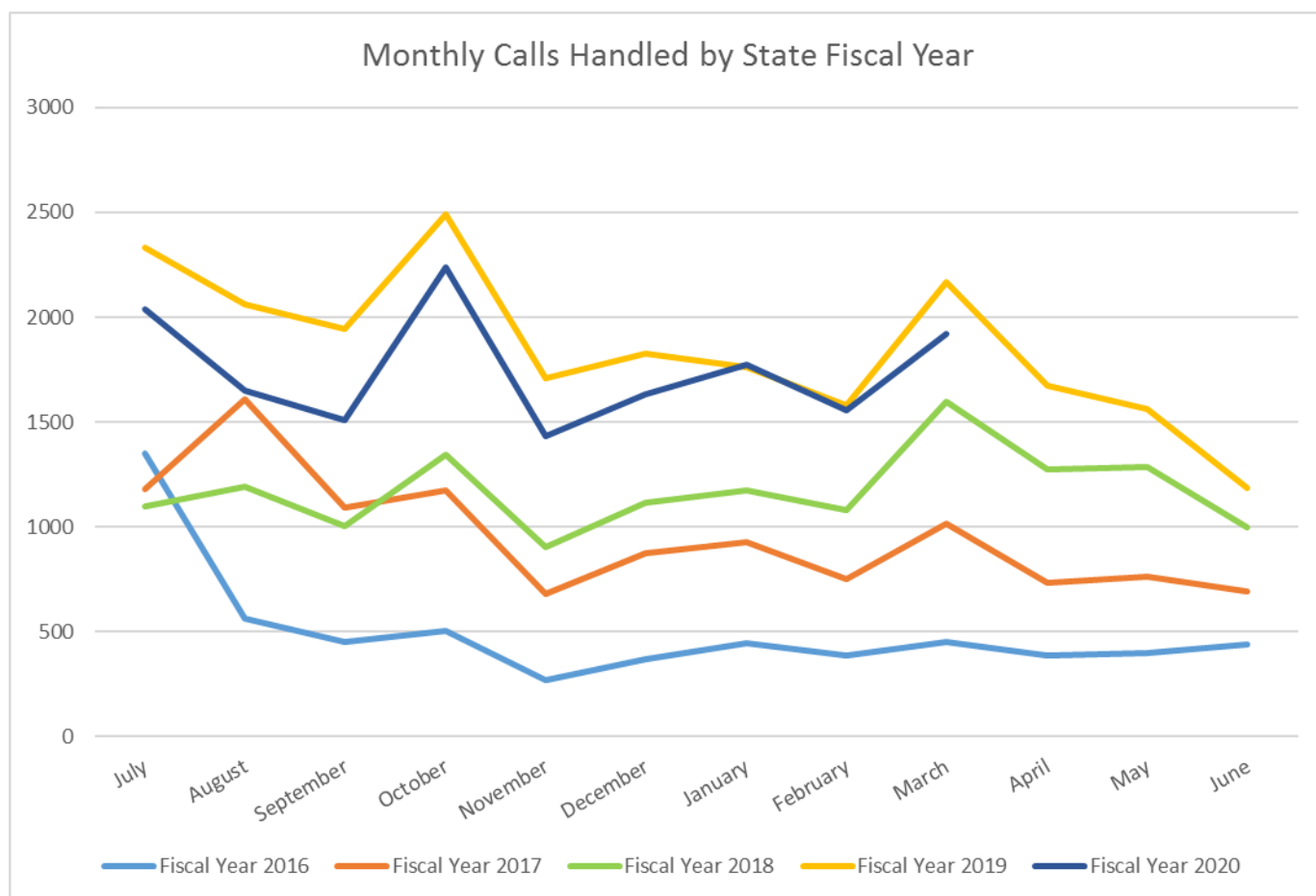


**Figure 5. Count of registered health care practitioners actively in the patient registry since the program start, through March 31, 2020.**

Table 5 shows that as of March 31, 2020, there were 1,738 health care practitioners approved in the registry system. Of the 1,738 registered practitioners, 1,259 are physicians, 137 are physician assistants, and 342 are APRNs. One year ago, there were 1,494 registered health care practitioners, 1,116 of whom were physicians (75%), 112 of whom were physician assistants (7%), and 266 of whom were APRNs (18%).

**Table 5: Breakdown of Registered Health Care Practitioners by Type, as of March 31, 2020**

Healthcare Practitioner Type	N (%)
Physician	1,259 (72%)
Physician Assistant	137 (8%)
Advanced Practice RN	342 (20%)
Total	1,738



**Figure 6. Number of monthly calls handled by OMC staff since program start. The month of July, fiscal year 2016, also includes the calls handled from June when the call center went live.**

Activity in the program markedly increased beginning July 1, 2016, when Intractable Pain became a qualifying medical condition. The volume of phone calls received by OMC increased beginning in July 2016. Eleven of the thirteen highest call-volume months occurred in fiscal year 2019 (ending June 30, 2019). The number of calls are down slightly in fiscal 2020 over fiscal year 2019.

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