



## AAN NEWS & NOTES

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE IN THE PRACTICE OF NEUROLOGY

WWW.ALNEUROLOGY.COM

## Medical Cannabis rules proposed

*Medical Association of the State of Alabama*

The Alabama Board of Medical Examiners (BME) has issued for public comment rules for physician certification to recommend cannabis to patients with qualifying medical conditions. These rules provide the framework for physician application and eligibility for a certification permit and the actual physician requirements for certification for medical cannabis use.



### A summary of the rules is as follows:

1. In order for a physician to be eligible for a certification permit, the physician must hold a current unrestricted Alabama medical license, an Alabama Controlled Substance Certificate, and a DEA license.
2. The physician must be registered and have access to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) and the Alabama Medical Cannabis Patient Registry System.
3. Physicians must complete an initial four-hour (4) CME course on medical cannabis and a two-hour (2) review course every two years.
4. The initial Certification Permit is \$300 and must be renewed annually with a fee of \$200.
5. Per the legislative statute, certifying physicians will be prohibited from having a financial interest related to the certification of a patient's qualifying medical condition (other than fees charged for medical services rendered).
6. Physicians can only certify qualifying medical conditions for which they have education and training to treat patients in their normal course of practice.
7. Physicians must follow specific documentation requirements including minimum standards for patient records, written patient

*continued on page 4*

## CMS finalizes regulatory changes and updates physician payment system

*American Academy of Neurology*

Each year, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issues regulations that impact the reimbursement of physicians. On Nov. 2, CMS finalized a rule updating payment policies and rates for physicians paid under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule in 2022.

The final rule illustrates the importance of the American Academy of Neurology's regulatory advocacy efforts on behalf of neurologists and their patients.

CMS expects payments across the specialty of neurology to stay at current levels in 2022, with variations depending on the individual provider's practice. However, all specialties are also potentially facing a 3.7 percent reduction in the conversion factor used to formulate payments under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule.

The Academy is working with physician associations from across the house of medicine to fight against these potential cuts, which recently resulted in having 247 members of the U.S. House of Representatives sign a letter urging congressional leaders to act on this issue before the end of the year.

The American Academy of Neurology has summarized the final rule in the following areas:

- Evaluation and Management (E/M) Visits
- Telehealth Regulations
- Appropriate Use Criteria
- Quality Payment Program
- MIPS Value Pathway

Read their report at [www.aan.com](http://www.aan.com).

## Alabama Academy of Neurology

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### ABOUT AAN

The Alabama Academy of Neurology is the professional association representing neurologists in Alabama.

AAN is dedicated to:

- Supporting the highest standards of excellence in the practice of neurology
- Improving patient access to quality neurological care;
- Advancing the profession of neurology by supporting principals, policies and practices that seek to improve patient care, and
- Supporting education and advocacy for our profession, our patients and their families.



### COVID-19 Resource Center

Continue to keep up-to-date with the latest information and resources on the AAN's COVID-19 Neurology Resource Center. <https://www.aan.com/tools-and-resources/covid-19-neurology-resource-center/>.

# why MEMBERSHIP matters



**I**t's time to pay 2022 membership dues to the Alabama Academy of Neurology! Membership means joining your colleagues in the only specialty society in Alabama that works to protect the neurology profession and patient's access to care.

### Lobbying

AAN members have a strong voice in the Alabama State House and the U.S. Congress with a top-notch lobbying team focusing on legislation to strengthen the practice of neurosurgery.

AAN members receive updates on legislation, what it means to you as a professional, and how to contact committee members to voice your opinion.

***Your voice counts!***

### Communication

AAN members receive a quarterly e-newsletter and e-mail blasts of the top news and events affecting Alabama's neurologists. In 2020-2021, we regularly communicated COVID-19 resources, including Conference Calls and grant information, and how to order PPE.

### Education

AAN offers an educational program each year. While our 2020 Conference was cancelled because of COVID-19 we were able to meet in person for our 2021 Conference.

Our 2022 Conference is set for Aug. 27 at the Grand Bohemian in Mountain Brook. More details will be shared via email and on AAN's website, [www.alneurology.com](http://www.alneurology.com), as they become available.



### Networking

AAN members are a great resource for professional networking. Get connected, and get to know your fellow practitioners!

**You've already invested in your career. Your membership in AAN is a vital continuation of that investment.**

### Join Us Today!

Visit [www.alneurology.com](http://www.alneurology.com) to print a dues form or find a link to online dues payment. We are only as strong as our membership, and we want you to join us!

### Questions?

If you have questions, contact **Meghan Martin** at (334) 954-2500 or by e-mail at [mmartin@alamedical.org](mailto:mmartin@alamedical.org).

AAN's membership year is from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

## Pay your 2022 dues online!

[www.tinyurl.com/AAN2022Membership](http://www.tinyurl.com/AAN2022Membership)



# AAN 2021 Annual Conference Wrap-up



*More than 65 gathered for AAN's 2021 conference in August at the Grand Bohemian Hotel in Mountain Brook.*



*Winning first place in the poster presentation was Clara Wan, BA, UAB School of Medicine, with Abstract 21-01, Demographic and clinical associations with Neuromyelitis Optica Spectrum Disorder in an academic medical center.*

*View all abstract submissions at <http://alneurology.com/annual-conference/>.*

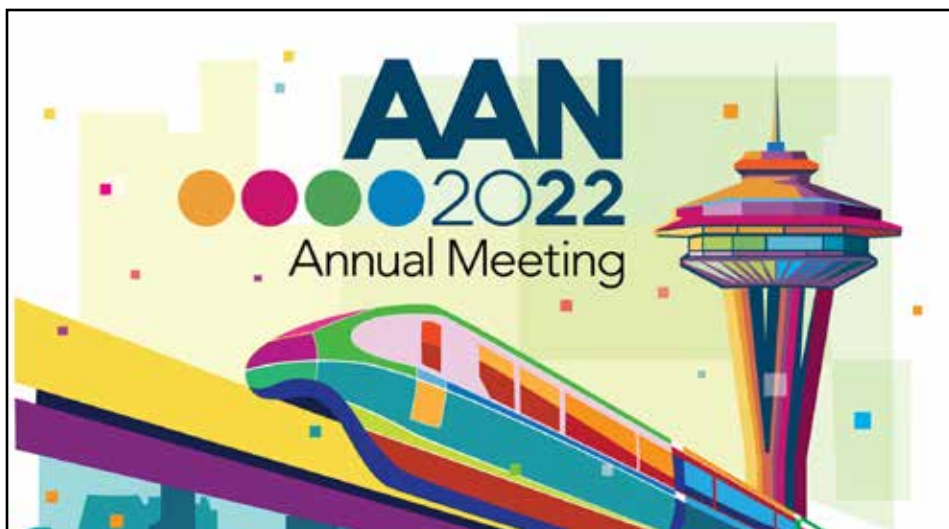
## Poster Presentation



## Exhibit Hall



*The exhibit hall provided attendees with the opportunity to learn about products and services that benefit neurologists. More than 30 vendors were represented at the 2021 meeting!*



## American Academy Of Neurology 2022 Annual Meeting – The Great Neuro Reunion

The 2022 AAN Annual Meeting is back in person – with the addition of a distinct convenient virtual option, too! Let's make this the best Annual Meeting yet, by getting back to the unforgettable moments, the friendships and camaraderie, the knowledge sharing, and the opportunities for success we create when we're together. As always, the meeting will be filled with exclusive neurology science and education for neurology professionals worldwide and applicable for all career stages.

Attendees may gather in person April 2-7 in Seattle or virtually April 24-26. Learn more at [aan.com/events/annual-meeting](https://aan.com/events/annual-meeting).

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AAN News & Notes is published quarterly. The articles are meant to provoke thought and comment and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the members, Board of Directors or staff of the Alabama Academy of Neurology. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome.

## Medical Cannabis rules, continued

consent, and submissions to the State patient registry.

- Certifying physicians must provide an annual report to the BME with their observations of the effectiveness of medical cannabis.

### Qualifying Medical Conditions Per the Legislative Statute

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Cancer-related cachexia, nausea or vomiting, weight loss, or chronic pain
- Crohn's Disease
- Depression
- Epilepsy or a condition causing seizures
- HIV/AIDS-related nausea or weight loss
- Panic disorder
- Parkinson's disease
- Persistent nausea that is not significantly responsive to traditional treatment, except for nausea related to pregnancy, cannabis-induced cyclical vomiting syndrome, or 24 cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Sickle Cell Anemia
- Spasticity associated with a motor neuron disease, including Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis
- Spasticity associated with Multiple Sclerosis or a spinal cord injury
- A terminal illness
- Tourette's Syndrome
- A condition causing chronic or

intractable pain in which conventional therapeutic intervention and opiate therapy is contraindicated or has proved ineffective

To see a full copy of the proposed rules from the BME please click the following link: [https://www.albme.gov/uploads/pdfs/MED\\_EX\\_540-X-25\\_Proposed.pdf](https://www.albme.gov/uploads/pdfs/MED_EX_540-X-25_Proposed.pdf)

These rules have been only approved for public comment and are not final. Anyone wishing to comment on the proposed rules can do so by submitting written comments to:

Alabama Board of Medical Examiner  
Medical Cannabis Regulations  
PO Box 946  
Montgomery, Al 36101-0946

## Physician Interest Survey

Based on the proposed rules as summarized above, the Medical Association is wanting to determine the level of interest from Alabama physicians in becoming certified to recommend medical cannabis to their patients. By taking this quick survey you will assist the Association and the State in the planning and development of the medical education needed to become certified.

[Take the Physician Interest Survey](#)