

ATTENTION VETERANS!

Have you been denied pain or anxiety medication because of your use of medical marijuana, in accordance with state law? We want to hear from you!

National VA issued a directive in January 2011 stating that patients in pain control treatment who are participating in state marijuana programs “must not be denied VHA services,” adding that “decisions to modify treatment plans in those situations need to be made by individual providers in partnership with their patients.” See: http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/View-Publication.asp?pub_ID=2362

Despite this, on September 23, 2014 acting Desert Pacific Healthcare Network director Jeffrey Gering issued a VISN policy stating: “For safety reasons in patients



receiving chronic opioid therapy for non-malignant pain, if UDS detects marijuana, opioid therapy will be tapered off and discontinued if patient continues to use any form of marijuana and opioids concurrently.” See: <http://www.canorml.org/VISN22.pdf>

Subsequently, California NORML has received numerous complaints from vets being denied their pain medicines because they are augmenting their pain regimen with doctor-recommended medical marijuana. We are working with government officials to get a reversal of this policy, and would like to hear from vets who have been affected by it.

If you are a veteran who has been denied medication at a VA because of your medical marijuana use, please contact: Ellen Komp, CalNORML Deputy Director at ellen@canorml.org or 415-563-5858.

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