

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES  
SUBSTANTIVE POLICY STATEMENT  
#SP-093-PHS-EDC**

**Clarification of the Requirement for Treatment for a Qualifying Patient with a Diagnosis of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder**

*This substantive policy statement is advisory only. A substantive policy statement does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal procedures of the agency and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules made in accordance with the Arizona Administrative Procedure Act. If you believe that this substantive policy statement does impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may petition the agency under Arizona Revised Statutes § 41-1033 for a review of the statement.*

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The purpose of this substantive policy statement is to provide the public with clarification of the Arizona Department of Health Services' (Department's) interpretation of what constitutes treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that would allow a qualifying patient with a diagnosis of PTSD to obtain a registry identification card under A.R.S. Title 9, Chapter 28.1.

A qualifying patient who wants to apply for a registry identification card must obtain a written certification from a physician. (A.A.C. R9-17-202) For a qualifying patient with a diagnosis of PTSD, the physician's statement will need to include a statement that the physician has verified that the qualifying patient is receiving treatment other than medical marijuana for PTSD.

Treatment could include medical services, as defined in Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 36-401, or behavioral health services, as defined in A.R.S. § 36-401. The specific treatment regimen for a qualifying patient would be tailored to the specific needs and symptoms of the qualifying patient and would vary from individual to individual. Treatment could include, but is not limited to:

- Psychotherapy (counseling), varying in frequency and duration, to help the qualifying patient face and control fear, make sense of bad memories, and reduce anxiety, such as:
  - Learning the symptoms of PTSD and how it affects a specific individual
  - Examining the individual's thoughts about the trauma that triggered the PTSD
  - Gradually exposing the individual to thoughts, settings, or situations that cause the onset of symptoms
  - Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing to make it easier for the brain to handle, process, and work through traumatic memories
  - Participating in family therapy to improve understanding and communication
- Participation in support groups to help the qualifying patient feel less isolated or alone;
- Use of medications to help the qualifying patient with reducing depression, relaxing, or sleeping.

A physician may verify that a qualifying patient is receiving treatment other than medical marijuana for PTSD by reviewing the qualifying patient's medical records, the qualifying patient's profile on the Arizona Board of Pharmacy Controlled Substances Prescription Monitoring Program database, statements signed by the leader of a support group, or other documentation indicating that treatment for PTSD is being provided to the qualifying patient.

A qualifying patient will not need to disclose to the Department the specific treatment received by the qualifying patient or the provider(s) of the treatment.