

# **Officials Accelerate New Mexico Psilocybin Therapy Program Launch**

## **New Mexico Department of Health Expedites Medical Psilocybin Program, Aiming to Launch a Year Ahead of Schedule**

New Mexico is moving quickly to become a national leader in psychedelic medicine, with state health officials announcing an accelerated timeline for the rollout of the state's medical psilocybin program during its first advisory board meeting on Friday. The program, established under Senate Bill 219, positions New Mexico as the third state in the country to legalize psilocybin, also known as magic mushrooms, for therapeutic use in controlled medical settings.

## **Medical Psilocybin Advisory Board Convenes Virtually to Discuss Program Structure, Patient Access, and Operational Procedures**

Seven members of the newly formed Medical Psilocybin Advisory Board joined Department of Health experts, state Sen. Jeff Steinborn (D-Las Cruces), and dozens of public attendees to review a draft of the program's operational procedures. Discussions centered on patient eligibility, safety protocols, provider licensing, and the expected timeline for program implementation.

Sen. Steinborn, co-sponsor of SB 219, highlighted the innovative nature of New Mexico's initiative. "We are experiencing a new renaissance...of psychedelic medicine," he said. "By definition, we're pioneers and we're going to learn a lot, but I also want to challenge you to not be afraid to try new things, to innovate, to make things better than maybe they've been in other states, in some cases."

## **Eligibility Criteria for Patients Include Treatment-Resistant Depression, PTSD, Substance Use Disorders, End-of-Life Care, and Other Conditions Approved by the DOH**

Under SB 219, patients qualify for medical psilocybin treatment if diagnosed with major treatment-resistant depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance use disorders, end-of-life care needs, or other conditions approved by the Department of Health. Originally, the program's launch was required no later than December 31, 2027.

However, officials now aim to make the program available a full year earlier, signaling strong interest from patients and advocacy groups in accessing psilocybin treatments sooner.

## **Department of Health Hires Key Personnel to Support Early Program Launch, Including Program Manager, Compliance Officer, and Environmental Scientist**

Dominick Zurlo, director of the Center for Medical Cannabis and Psilocybin, told the board that the Department of Health has set the ambitious goal of opening the program to initial patients by the end of December 2026. The department has already appointed a program manager and is actively hiring an environmental scientist and a compliance officer to support operational readiness.

“Because there has been such large interest in this and a push for us to try to be able to help people with psilocybin treatments earlier, we have set a goal now to have the program at least to be able to see the initial patients by the end of December of 2026,” Zurlo said.

## **Public Participation Highlights Enthusiasm, Questions on Treatment Access, Supply Chains, and Licensing for Providers**

During public comment, members of the community expressed strong support and curiosity about the program. Attendees asked about patient access, the involvement of local mushroom growers in the supply chain, and how medical providers would be licensed to administer psilocybin treatments.

Denali Wilson, director of strategic support for the nonprofit Healing Advocacy Fund, emphasized the need to balance urgency with careful planning. “While it is important for the program to move forward with urgency, achieving the right balance of safety, affordability and equity will require careful attention and thoughtfulness,” Wilson said. “Let’s be sure that any acceleration of the regulatory timeline doesn’t unintentionally compromise patient safety, undermine long-term sustainability or limit meaningful public engagement.”

## **New Mexico’s Accelerated Psilocybin Timeline Reflects National Trend Toward Therapeutic Psychedelics, Highlighting Safety, Ethics, and Accessibility**

The state’s push to move forward rapidly on medical psilocybin follows a growing national interest in psychedelics for mental health treatment. Advocates note that conditions like depression, PTSD, and substance use disorders could benefit from controlled psilocybin therapy, but they caution that rigorous safety standards, clear ethical guidelines, and equitable patient access must remain central to program implementation.

Steinborn reinforced this vision during the advisory board meeting, stressing that New Mexico’s program would serve as a model for other states watching closely. “Other states will be learning from how we establish this program,” he said. “We have an opportunity to set the standard for safety, accessibility, and innovation in therapeutic psychedelics.”

## **Advisory Board to Provide Ongoing Guidance on Program Implementation, Monitoring, and Public Education**

The advisory board will continue to meet regularly, providing input on operational procedures, patient screening protocols, and public education campaigns. Its guidance will help ensure the program is implemented responsibly, with transparency and robust monitoring systems in place.

Officials indicated that the board's work will also involve collaboration with local growers, medical providers, and advocacy groups to create a sustainable and scalable psilocybin program.

## **New Mexico's Psilocybin Program Poised to Launch a Year Earlier, Signaling a Major Step Forward in Psychedelic Medicine**

With the Department of Health targeting an end-of-2026 launch, New Mexico is positioning itself as a pioneer in psychedelic therapy. The state's approach aims to balance rapid access with strict safety and compliance standards, offering hope to patients with limited treatment options while setting a benchmark for other states considering similar programs.

As New Mexico moves ahead with its expedited timeline, the focus remains on ensuring patient safety, equitable access, and comprehensive public engagement, laying the groundwork for a new era in medical psilocybin therapy.

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