



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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April 16, 2013

Dear Healthcare Professional:

**Virginia will participate, Saturday, April 27, 2013 in the sixth National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.** Sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration, this collaborative effort between state and local law enforcement agencies provides residents with an opportunity to dispose of potentially dangerous controlled substances from their medicine cabinets in an environmentally safe manner. Collection activities will take place from **10:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m.** at sites designated by law enforcement throughout Virginia. To find a collection site nearby or for more information, click on the following link: [http://www.deaddiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/index.html](http://www.deaddiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html). Please note that this service is free and anonymous; no questions asked. The previous five National Prescription Drug Take-Back events removed more than 2 million pounds (1,018 tons) of prescription medications from circulation nationwide and provided for their safe, secure, and environmentally sound disposal.

Prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in the United States. According to the most recent Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) survey, prescription medications are the second-most abused category of drugs, with marijuana being first. As the dependence on prescription drugs for non-medical use continues to increase, the 2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) found that medicine cabinets are where youth between the ages of 12 and 18 most often obtain the drugs and there have been 1.9 million or more new non-medical pain reliever users each year since 2002. Therefore, it is important for prescription drugs to be disposed of properly to help reduce the risk of prescription drug diversion and abuse. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2010, more than 38,000 people died from drug overdoses, and nearly 60 percent of these deaths involved prescription drugs.

Health care practitioners can directly impact prescription drug abuse by educating patients regarding the proper disposal of medications. Please consider posting or providing to your patients the attached information regarding this opportunity to properly dispose of unwanted drugs.

For more information please contact Ralph Orr, Program Manager of the Virginia Prescription Monitoring Program at 804-367-4566 or by email at [pmp@dhp.virginia.gov](mailto:pmp@dhp.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

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