



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Director

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Dear Healthcare Colleague:

Virginia will participate Saturday, October 26, 2019 in the 18th 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 take place from **10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.** at sites throughout Virginia. The [DEA website](#) has additional information as well as a place to enter your zip code to find a local collection site.

Healthcare practitioners can directly impact prescription drug abuse by educating patients regarding the proper disposal of medications. Please **share this video** regarding how to properly dispose of unwanted drugs with your patients and colleagues.

The April 2019 Take Back Day brought in 937,443 pounds (468.72 tons) of unused or expired prescription medication. This brings the total amount of prescription drugs collected by DEA since the fall of 2010 to 11,816,393 pounds. Of that amount Virginia collected 354,012 pounds of drugs statewide.

National data cites prescription drug abuse as the fastest growing drug problem in the U.S. This is reflected in unprecedented numbers of accidental poisonings and overdoses. Many people are unaware that prescription drugs are susceptible to diversion, misuse and abuse and are easily obtained from home medicine cabinets for improper use. Flushing this medication down the toilet presents public safety and public health concerns, such as entering the drinking water supply. Your support of Drug Take-Back Day is an important example to set.

For more information please contact Ralph Orr, Director of the Virginia Prescription Monitoring Program at 804-367-4514, or by email at pmp@dhp.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

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