



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Healthcare Colleague:

As work continues to stop the spread of COVID-19, those of us on the front lines of public health must also continue the fight against opioid addiction, accidental poisonings and drug overdose.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on overdose fatalities with over 600 overdose deaths in the second quarter of 2020. This is a 67% increase over the second quarter of 2019.

There is something each and every one of us can do.

Virginia will participate from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 24, 2020 in the US Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) 19<sup>th</sup> National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. This collaboration between state and local law enforcement agencies provides residents with the opportunity to dispose of potentially dangerous controlled substances in their medicine cabinets in an environmentally safe manner.

Visit the [DEA's website](#) where patients and colleagues can enter their zip code to find a local collection site to properly dispose of unwanted drugs with no questions asked. I hope you will share this site with others.

Your support of Drug Take-Back Day is an important example to set.

Many people are unaware that prescription drugs are susceptible to diversion, misuse and abuse 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. National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing unused prescription drugs, spread the word about the potential for abuse of medications and give people a means to do something about it.

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](mailto:pmp@dhp.virginia.gov).

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