



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

David E. Brown, D.C.
Director

Department of Health Professions

Perimeter Center
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300
Henrico, Virginia 23233-1463

www.dhp.virginia.gov
TEL (804) 367- 4400
FAX (804) 527- 4475

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Dear Healthcare Colleague:

Virginia will participate Saturday, April 29, 2017 in the twelfth National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), 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.

Healthcare practitioners are encouraged to advise patients about this service and to remind them it is free and anonymous with no questions asked. Collection activities will take place from **10:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m.** at sites coordinated with law enforcement agencies throughout Virginia. Visit the [DEA online](#) for more information, and to [find a collection site near you](#).

According to the DEA, some 4,823,251 pounds (or 2,411 tons) of drugs were collected nationwide from 2010-2014. Last year, Virginia collected 22,855 pounds of prescription drugs from over 200 collection sites 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.

Healthcare practitioners can directly impact prescription drug abuse by educating patients regarding the proper disposal of medications. Please consider sharing details of the [DEA initiative](#) regarding this opportunity to properly dispose of unwanted drugs.

For more information please contact Ralph Orr, Director of the Virginia Prescription Monitoring Program at 804-367-4566, or by email at pmp@dhp.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

David E. Brown, D.C.
Director
Department of Health Professions