Project: Drug Drop Zone

Kingsport Police Department’s Medication Take-Back Initiative
Project: Drug Drop Zone

- Project: Drug Drop Zone is a Cooperative Effort between the Kingsport Police Department’s Community Relations & Crime Prevention Unit and East Tennessee State University’s Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy.
Project: Drug Drop Zone

- Project: Drug Drop Zone began on September 25, 2010.
- An offsite medication collection event was held at the Rhoten Allstate Agency in Kingsport from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM.
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- In just four hours, the drugs K.P.D. collected totalled...
This inaugural event firmly established a definite need for a pharmaceutical collection program; however, for the next 16 months, K.P.D. did not collect any more medication.

While extremely productive, the offsite event proved to be a very labor intensive (staffing/transportation) and non cost effective (overtime) method for medication collection.

Also, events such as this could only be held on a periodic basis.

- What do I do with my medications if I missed the event?
- What do I do with my medications in between events?
Thanks to a grant from the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators, a permanent drop box was installed in the lobby of the K.P.D. Justice Center on January 27, 2012.
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- To date, Project: Drug Drop Zone collections have exceeded...
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What do we collect?

- Non-Narcotics
- Narcotics
- Over the Counter (OTC)
- Herbals
- Supplements
- Vitamins
- Veterinary Medications
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- What do we not collect?
  - Needles or Sharps
  - Biohazard Materials
  - Illegal Drugs
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- Why do we collect medication?
  - To Keep Drugs Off the Street
  - To Prevent Overdoses and Accidental Poisonings
  - To Avoid Environmental Contamination
What do we do with the medication we collect?

All Project: Drug Drop Zone deposits (including medication containers) are incinerated.
Project: Drug Drop Zone

- Factual Basis for Need for Collection:
  - In 2010, 272 Million does of Hydrocodone were prescribed in the State of Tennessee.
  - This is enough to supply 51 doses for every man, woman, and child over the age of 12 living in the state.
Factual Basis for Need for Collection:

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported last year that one person dies of an unintentional drug overdose every 19 minutes.
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- Factual Basis for Need for Collection:
  - Nearly 70 percent of Americans are on at least one prescription drug.
  - More than half of Americans receive at least two prescriptions.
  - 20 percent of Americans are on five or more prescription medications.
Factual Basis for Need for Collection:

- Opioids are the third most prescribed medication, with only antibiotics and antidepressants more commonly prescribed.
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- Factual Basis for Need for Collection:
  - Spending on prescription drugs reached $250 billion in 2009, and accounted for 12 percent of total personal health care expenditures.
Factual Basis for Need for Collection:

- Avoidable costs of more than $200 billion are incurred each year in the U.S. healthcare system as a result of medicines not being used responsibly by patients and healthcare professionals.
Factual Basis for Need for Collection:

- The use of narcotic painkillers, or opioids, has boomed over the past decade as drug makers and doctors have promoted them for a new use: treating long-term pain from back injuries, headaches, arthritis and conditions such as fibromyalgia.
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- Factual Basis for Need for Collection:
  - Insurers have grown to see pills as a cheaper way to treat chronic pain than other methods.
America’s Top 10 Most Medicated States

Retail Prescriptions filled per capita for 2009

1. West Virginia 18.4
2. Tennessee 16.9 – approx $6.1 billion
3. Alabama 16.7
4. Kentucky 16.5
5. Arkansas 16.4
6. South Carolina 16.3
7. Mississippi 15.9
8. Iowa 15.3
9. Missouri 15.0
10. Vermont 15.0
Rx Access Points—
Friends & Family Source of Concern

Patient Disposal Habits

500 patients surveyed:

- **54%** disposed of medications in the trash
- **35.4%** flushed drugs down the toilet or sink
- **7.2%** did not dispose of medications
- **2%** used all medication prior to expiration
- **1.4%** returned medications to the pharmacy

Periodically, a content analysis of Project: Drug Drop Zone’s deposits is conducted by faculty and students of E.T.S.U.’s Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy.

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As a direct result of Project: Drug Drop Zone and similar programs across the region, East Tennessee State University has received grant funding of $2.2 Million from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to launch a five-year research program aimed at battling prescription drug abuse and misuse.
The Grant Team will:

- Study how communication among health care providers who prescribe drugs, pharmacists who dispense them, and the patients who receive them can reduce illicit use of prescription medications,
- Study how well health care providers think that they communicate with patients about substance abuse, and how prepared they feel to intervene in cases of suspected abuse, and
- Quantify the outcomes of drug take-back events and drug donation boxes where substances with potential for abuse are removed from households.
Project: Drug Drop Zone has proven to be successful beyond what could ever have been imagined.

For more information on Project: Drug Drop Zone and other programs offered by the Kingsport Police Department’s Community Relations & Crime Prevention Unit, contact:

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