STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee: How everyone can help combat the opioid crisis

Posted on Tuesday, Aug 15, 2017

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. Get the app or access via desktop.

Contact: Jon Richards, Coalition Coordinator, jonr@zgkc-law.com or (414) 272 – 2295

MILWAUKEE – Last week, President Trump declared a National Opioid Crisis instructing his Administration to use all appropriate emergency and other authorities to respond to the crisis caused by the opioid epidemic that is ravaging this country.

Here in Milwaukee County, there's an easy, common sense way for residents to help combat the opioid crisis. Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee Coalition works with local pharmacies and police stations to offer free, secure drop-off locations for unused medications at sites around the county. Map of sites: http://takebackyourmedsmilwaukee.org/disposal-locations/.

"We're glad President Trump has declared the opioid crisis what it is – an emergency," said Jon Richards, Coalition Coordinator of Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee and a local attorney, following up on the President's August 10th announcement. "The easy availability of prescription drugs is a major factor in overdose, which is the leading cause of accidental death in Milwaukee. Helping residents dispose of these medications responsibly is one important step toward a solution to this devastating problem."

Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee helps residents clean out their medicine cabinets responsibly. "It's important for Milwaukeeans to dispose of their unused medications by taking them back to a secure drop off site, and we're fighting the

prevailing misinformation that it's OK to flush your meds or dump them in the trash," said Richards. "The only responsible way to dispose of medications is by taking them to a secure drop-off site. If you put them in the trash, they can easily be discovered by children or others who may ingest them, which could lead to severe harm."

Amber Meyer Smith of Clean Wisconsin added, "If you flush medications down the toilet or throw them in the trash, the compounds in those medications end up in Lake Michigan, the source of Milwaukee's drinking water."

Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee is looking for more pharmacies to host drop-off sites, so it's easier for residents to take responsible action. The Coalition has resources available for pharmacies to help them understand what it takes to become a secure drug take-back location and quickly implement the program.

For example, Hayat Pharmacy has placed drug disposal boxes in two of its pharmacies in Milwaukee County. Each box collects more than 100 pounds of drugs per year. Hayat Pharmacy is a member of the Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee Coalition.

***

About Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee:

Take Back Your Meds Milwaukee's mission is to ensure Milwaukee County residents know why and how they should dispose of their medications responsibly, and to create opportunities for safe, secure and easy drug disposal in every neighborhood. TBYMM is a coalition of organizations including the Medical Society of Milwaukee, Hayat Pharmacy, Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Care Professionals, Milwaukee County Substance Abuse Coalition, Clean Wisconsin, Community Advocates Public Policy Institute, Aids Resource Center of Wisconsin, Southeastern Wisconsin Common Ground, Service Employees International Union, and Citizen Action. Learn more at http://takebackyourmedsmilwaukee.org