

Consumer Education Work Session

**Safe Drug Return
Track A**

**Facilitated by Ray Bullman
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The National Council for Patient Information & Education (NCPIE) is a coalition of 110 organizations, and was incorporated in 1982. Ray has been with NCPIE for 3 years.

There are two key issues in this topic today:

- 1) Creating (nationally) what is right for safe medication disposal.**
- 2) Evaluation of these types of take-back programs.**

Reaching consumers about proper medicine disposal:

Potential targets:

- Every American household
- Every parent – takes or administers medicines
- Every child (age 12+)
- Every prescriber
- Every pharmacist

Reasons for proper medication disposal campaign:

- Curtail childhood overdoses.
- Restrict household drug theft.
- Limit accumulation of drugs by the elderly.
- Protect our physical environment

On a national level, we need to start thinking about these issues:

- Reach every newspaper, and make sure they print the story right! Don't just tell the people to get rid of medications without explaining the proper and safe way.
- Wouldn't it be great if everything went out in multiple languages, on a regular basis, with the same message!

Potential high impact starting points:

- Look for organizations that can have an impact at multiple levels.
- Reach at point of prescribing (have doctor/psychiatrist explain proper disposal).
- 6/10 people said they trust their physicians most about medication prescription and issues.
- 3.4 Billion prescriptions written and dispensed in 2006 alone!
- Most medication bottles and directions include written information which is either hard to read, micro type or has staples all through it.
- Sometimes instructions from doctors don't all get put on paper due to pharmacists not having enough space. The result could be something like this: "Please follow these instructions properly, you must-"
- Proper disposal techniques typically not written on bottle or discussed by physician.

Objectives and messages:

- Building awareness.
- Promote understanding about proper disposal.

Put this issue on the radar:

- Generate extensive national & local media attention.
- Create monthly calendar dates about times and ways to properly dispose of medications.

Questions raised:

- What do health care providers think about proper medicine disposal?
- What do health care providers think their patients think, know and practice regarding drug disposal?

Keep in mind...
No public health issue has unlimited funds

Recognizing a website as a source of credible health information:

- If this information could be collected and distributed into the Internet through surveys and different areas, how would this affect safe disposal methods?
- How can we make this website easily accessible by all, including computer non-friendly people?

Campaign launch:

Develop a *Press Kit*:

- lead release – summarizing the survey findings.
- executive summary – of survey findings.
- backgrounder – of impact on health and the environment.

Launch news conference:

- Put this out nationally at a particular location and time (an event).
- After the kickoff, extend the reach with press kit.
- Schedule appearances for the conference.

At the community level, develop a *Campaign Action Kit*:

- Provide materials.
- Key messages and talking points.
- Sample news release.
- Newspaper sample column.

Stakeholders could be invited to take an active role in the distribution of materials and information.

Promoting availability – pushing info to key players and organization contacts:

- Placing links to websites on strategic places to gain momentum.
- Incorporating campaign messages directly in patient materials.
- Give dates-by this month next year, we should have articles and newspaper messages in every major magazine/newspaper.
- What kind of message can you give to the public?

These issues need to be resolved consumers don't get confused:

- Consumers get told, "Don't flush this down the toilet, unless it's this (prescription name) kind of drug."
- Customers don't understand this – it doesn't make sense.

Television, radio placements:

- 20/20, dateline, Oprah, Regis and Kelly, Morning drive radio reports and interviews.
- Public advertising can work when given by respectable source, and has an important message.
- PSA could get picked up.
- Pick different media, see what works best, stick to that, find out why it is so effective.

Quantitative results:

- Telephone follow-ups.
- How effective were the different kinds of messages?

Issues need to be brought into the public eye:

- What to do with those medicines?
- May need to let the communities deal with that for a little bit to find out for themselves.