



U. S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration

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SEP 29 2006

Stevan Gressitt, M.D.
Ilene Ruhoy, M.D.
Northeast Occupational Exchange
Maine Benzodiazepine Exchange Group
29 Franklin Street
Bangor, Maine 04401

Dear Drs. Gressitt and Ruhoy:

Thank you for your correspondence to Karen P. Tandy, Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), dated May 22, 2006, regarding the Maine Benzodiazepine Exchange Group's *Message of Concern Regarding Unused Pharmaceuticals*. The DEA shares in your interest regarding this important topic and recognizes the problems involved in the legitimate disposal of pharmaceutical controlled substances that have been dispensed to an ultimate user.

Personnel from DEA's Office of Diversion Control participated in an April 2006 conference on "end-user" disposal issues. The issue of "take-back" programs was also an agenda item for DEA's 15th National Conference held in Houston, Texas during June 2006. From these meetings and discussions with leaders in the "take-back" program arena, DEA recognizes the importance of developing measures to address this issue while remaining committed to reducing the potential for diversion of controlled substances.

We appreciate and thank you for your organization's concerns and will continue to consider options regarding "take-back" programs and the disposal of pharmaceutical controlled substances. Please do not hesitate to contact our Office of Diversion Control, Liaison and Policy Section, at (202) 307-7297 for additional information on the disposal issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph T. Rannazzisi".

Joseph T. Rannazzisi
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of Diversion Control