Death, Detection, Diversion, & Disposal: Utah Case Study

Presented by:

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October, 2009

http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/    www.useonlyasdirected.org
Drug Poisoning Deaths by Manner and Year — Utah 1991-2008
Death: The Bottom Line

- Prescribable drugs kill more Utahns each year than illicit drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Illicit Overdose Deaths</th>
<th>Combo (both Illicit and Non-illicit)</th>
<th>Non-illicit Overdose Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Drug overdoses investigated by OME that are accidental or undetermined intent*
Substances Involved in Non-illicit Overdose Deaths of Accidental or Undetermined Intent-2008
Drug Overdose Cases in 2008

407 cases of accidental or undetermined intent investigated by OME

89 illicit drugs only
Mean age = 36.3 yrs
Range 18-58
82% male
11% involve alcohol
9 counties
9 health districts

41 combination of illicit and non-illicit
Mean age = 39.7 yrs
Range 18-62
66% male
7% involve alcohol
10 counties
10 health districts

277 non-illicit drugs only
Mean age = 40.3 yrs
Range 1-80 (only 2<18 yrs)
52% male
11% involve alcohol
82% involve opioids
22 counties
12 of 12 health districts
Number of Non-Illicit, Accidental and Intent Undetermined Deaths by Year & Drug
National Threat

Pharmaceutical drug abuse is a significant national threat and growing trend. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), youth drug abuse declined 24% from 2001 to 2007 with 860,000 fewer young people abusing drugs. That’s the good news. The bad news is that abuse of prescription drugs is an emerging threat. They account for the second most commonly abused category of drugs behind marijuana and well ahead of methamphetamine.¹ Non-medical use of prescription pain relievers was the abuse drug category with the largest number of new abusers (2.2 million).²

According to the ONDCP Pharmaceutical Advisory Committee, every day 2,500 youth, ages 12-17 abuse prescription drugs for the first time.³ The committee also reports that admissions for prescription painkillers increased 300% in just ten years.³ Non-medical use of pharmaceuticals accounts for nearly a half-million medical emergency department visits annually.⁴ The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University conducted a study in 2006 showing 2.2 million teens (between the ages of 12-17) admitted abusing a prescription drug during the past year.⁵

“[Prescription drugs] account for the second most commonly abused category of drugs behind marijuana and well ahead of methamphetamine.”

“Every day 2,500 youth ages 12-17 abuse prescription drugs for the first time.”

“The non-medical use of pharmaceuticals accounts for nearly a half-million medical emergency department visits annually.”
Utah Threat

Utah is fourth in the nation for non-medical use of pain relievers. For 26 year olds and older, Utah has the second highest reported rates in the nation of using pain relievers for non-medical use. Of those using pain relievers for non-medical purposes, 75% are over 25 years old. The Utah Department of Health reports 317 people died from pharmaceutical drug overdose in 2007. That number is twice as high as overdose deaths caused from all illicit drugs in Utah that year.

According to a 2006 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study, 6.21% of Utahans 12 years of age or older report using pain relievers for non-medical use in the past year. According to the Utah Department of Human Services 2007 SHARP Survey, 16% of Utah youth between the ages of 12-17 reported abusing pharmaceutical drugs within the last 30 days.

Utah has a significant pharmaceutical drug abuse problem that must be addressed in a multi-disciplinary, coordinated statewide effort. Why is there an increase in abuse related to prescription drugs? The answer is related to availability, perception of risk and public attitude.

Availability
Prescription drugs can be obtained by simply going into the unsecured medicine cabinet in most homes. Once an individual decides to abuse pharmaceutical drugs, he or she can obtain them through a number of sources including family and friends. Sometimes it's as easy as using a restroom in another person's home, where most prescription drugs are stored unsecured. At "pharm parties," teenagers bring a variety of drugs from home and consolidate them for arbitrary use at the party. "Doctor shopping" is another relatively easy means of obtaining pharmaceutical drugs. Other methods include altered or forged prescriptions, stolen prescriptions, computer generated prescriptions, pharmaceutical burglaries and robberies, internet trafficking, diversion by medical personnel, pharmacists or their employees, and theft from pharmaceutical companies or their distributors. Lastly, pharmaceutical drugs can be obtained on the street from drug dealers who tend to specialize in these types of controlled substances.
Perception of Risk
There is a perception among the public and pharmaceutical drug abusers that the risks associated with prescription drugs are significantly less than with illegal drugs. Many users and non-users feel that, because the drugs are FDA approved and prescribed by a doctor, they are relatively harmless and safe. This perception of risk includes both adverse physical and psychological harm from use. The users also feel that since pharmaceutical drugs are "legal", the risk of getting in trouble with authorities is significantly less than with illegal drugs.

Public Attitude
The public is generally well aware of the dangers from using drugs such as marijuana, methamphetamines and cocaine. Although proponents of drug legalization attempt to change public attitude, polls and surveys show that the majority of the American public is against the use of illegal drugs. In those areas of our society where the public attitude is more favorable to illegal drug use, there is often a corresponding greater use pattern. Those societal subsets could be families or neighborhoods. In the case of pharmaceutical drugs, which are in almost every home for medical reasons, the public is more accepting. This more tolerant attitude tends to lead to greater non-medicinal use of prescription drugs.

"Many users and non-users feel that because [pharmaceutical] drugs are FDA approved and prescribed by a doctor, they are relatively harmless and safe. This perception of risk includes both adverse physical and psychological harm for use."
Strategy

UPDCP will use public and private multi-disciplinary resources to address the pharmaceutical drug abuse problem in Utah. This program will remain fluid and sufficiently flexible in adapting to change and assessments. The program will continue to monitor the threat, adjust the strategy and assess the results, both from a criminal justice and public awareness perspective.

The goal of the Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Project is to reduce the abuse of prescription drugs by accomplishing the following objectives:

- **Reduce** availability for abuse
- **Increase** the awareness of risk to include the physical and psychological harmful effects as well as legal sanctions; and
- **Decrease** tolerance of the non-medical use of pharmaceutical drugs.

The criminal justice component will target the sources for pharmaceutical drug diversion with the goal of disrupting or dismantling as many of these sources as possible. The public awareness and education component will educate the public and initiate community change through environmental strategies and policy.

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2 National Survey of Drug Use and Health by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services September 2006
3 Pharmacists Advisory Committee (PAC) Executive Summary 2007
4 The New DAWN Report July 2007
5 The DAWN Report
6 The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, “You’ve Got Drugs!”, Prescription Drug Pushers on the Internet, July 2001
7 Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Prescription Drugs, September 2006
8 Utah Department of Human Services, 2007 SHAFF Survey, October 5, 2007
9 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services “State Estimates of Substance Use” from the 2005-2006 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health

www.useonlyasdirected.org
# Executive Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Affiliation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Kirk Jorgensen</td>
<td>Chief Deputy U.S. Attorney General's Office</td>
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# Advisory Committee

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<td>Assistant Chief, Logan Police Department - Utah Department of Human Services</td>
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<td>Richard Ziebarth</td>
<td>Program Manager, Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice</td>
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Advisory Committee and Executive Committee provide recommendations. Enforcement/Regulatory & Public Awareness/Education Components conduct project activities.
Pharmaceutical Phase Plan

Phase I
- Federal State Local Partnership
- Establish Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Program
- DEA Utah Chiefs RMHIDTA Utah Stakeholders
- March, 2009

Phase II
- Regional Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Training in Salt Lake City (April 15 - 16, 2009)
- Sponsored by: NMCI, RMHIDTA & UPDCP

Phase III
- Enforcement & Regulatory: Initiate additional enforcement and regulatory efforts
- Public Awareness & Education: Initiate local community training for investigators, prescribers & dispensers. Provide training to a broad range of agencies, service providers and the community

Phase IV
- Finalize Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Action Plan

Phase V
- Implement Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Action Plan
- State/Counties/Local Community
- Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Public Awareness Campaign
- Evaluate/Determine Outcome of Action Plan Implementation

Proposed Components of Comprehensive Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Action Plan
- Establish Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Enforcement Task Force/Prosecutor at DEA
- Provide training for investigators, prosecutors, dispensers and prescribers
- Conduct the Utah Pharmaceutical Drug Crime Public Awareness Campaign
- Provide education presentations for community groups and private/public agencies
- Expand prescription ‘drop box’ take back program in Utah
- Enhance Utah’s Controlled Substance Database
- Implement additional fields in agency databases to track prescription drugs
DIVERSION
Proper Medication Disposal
http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov
DEQ Role: Pollution Prevention

Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products (PPCPs) are pollutants.
DEQ Role: Pollution Prevention

Crush and Flush

No wastewater treatment

http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/
How It Began
Drinking Water/Substance Abuse

• May 2007_Request for Funding

• Florence Reynolds of Salt Lake City Public Utilities

• Captain Armand Glick of SL County Sheriff’s Office

http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/
COMPLIANCE WITH RCRA

- Disposal options for HOUSEHOLDS only

- RCRA exemption for household hazardous waste

- This program does not address medical, pharmacy, schools, long-term care, or other facilities that may accumulate unused medications and are regulated under FDA, DEA, DOPL rules

http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/
GRANT PROGRAM

- “Drug Collection for Proper Disposal” Grant program.
- $1,000 one-time funding
  - Collection boxes
  - Signage
  - Evidence handling
  - Incineration
  - Advertising
  - Associated expenses

http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/
GRANT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- “Drug Collection for Proper Disposal” Policy
- Incineration at a DEQ permitted incinerator
- Compliance with [DEA Requirements](http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/)
- Reporting pounds to DEQ
- Locked collection bins – accessible, monitored, lobby
- Anonymous disposal
- Advertising of the program through normal communications with the public.

[http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/](http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/)
COMMUNITY SPECIAL EVENT COLLECTIONS

- **COMMUNITY SPECIAL EVENT COLLECTIONS:**
  - Household Hazardous Waste Collections
  - SLC Senior Housing
  - Smith’s Food and Drug Store
  - Be Well Fair at University of Utah
  - Intermountain Health Care Clinics
  - Senior Fairs

http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/
RESULTS

• $20,000 in grants awarded - another $50,000 grant secured

• 30 Bins in 10 of 24 counties

• Sponsored Community Events: ~ $3,000

• Partnerships
RESULTS

• Pounds of Medications Collected since 2007:
  • Bins: 5,000
  • 5 Senior Housing Facilities: 20
  • Supermarkets: 214
  • University Health Fair: 51.6
    – O.T.C.: 19.0
    – Non-Controlled Prescription: 27.6
    – Controlled Prescriptions: 5
Next Steps

• State Legislation
• Consistent Messaging and Branding
  • Do Not Flush! Do Not Pour!
  • Don’t Make the Fish Do Drugs!
  • Clean Out the Cabinet
  • Know Where They Go™
  • Proper Disposal of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs in Utah
  • Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet
Funding

The Utah Department of Environmental Quality is offering law enforcement agencies a one-time pollution prevention grant, up to $1,000, to establish a “Drug Collection for Proper Disposal” program.

This funding can be used to pay for: collection boxes, signage, evidence handling, incineration, advertising or associated expenses.

To find out more about this program and how to apply, please visit:

www.MedicationDisposal.utah.gov/funding.htm

Facts About Prescription Drug Disposal

* Unused medications improperly disposed can harm you and your environment.

* Drugs can be scavenged and illegally sold.

* Children and animals could be poisoned if they find and swallow drugs.

* When drugs are flushed, they are not removed by the sewage treatment facilities and septic tank systems and can enter the soil, surface water and groundwater.

* Research studies have shown that exposure to drugs found in waterways is having a serious

http://www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov/
Don’t Make The Fish Do Drugs!

Old prescription medications should never be disposed of down the toilet. There is a nationwide problem of prescription drugs showing up in waterways below water treatment facilities. These drugs are harmful to aquatic life and have potential effects on human health.

Take old and outdated prescription medications to the following location for disposal:

Please do your part and dispose of your old medications properly. If you are not able to bring them to one of the drop-off locations, add water and dish soap to each bottle, wrap in duct tape, and place in the trash on the day of collection. For more information, call the Salt Lake Valley Health Department at (801) 313-6745.

Rx Use only as directed.
You Can Protect Families and the Environment by Properly Disposing of Prescription Drugs

http://www.cleanoutthecabinet.org/
Secure or Dispose of Medication Properly

http://www.wasatchcounty.net/knowwheretheygo/Disposal.html
Tooele County Health Department

Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet!

Bring all your unused over-the-counter and prescription medications to the following Smith’s store so they can be safely destroyed.

Smith’s
845 East 4500 South
Salt Lake City
Saturday April 25, 2009
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

“Do Not Flush”

For more information call the DEQ Hotline
1-800-458-0145
or visit www.medicationdisposal.utah.gov
Contact Us

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• Leah Ann Lamb:  llamb@utah.gov