

# Secure Medicine Return for King County



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# Medicine Abuse & Overdoses



- Drug overdose deaths have surpassed car crashes as a leading cause of preventable death in King County.
- 209 fatal overdoses from prescription medicines in King County in 2010 .

# Epidemic: Responding to America's Prescription Drug Abuse Crisis

## 2013 National Drug Control Strategy:

1. Education of health providers and the public.
2. Expand prescription monitoring programs.
3. Safe drug disposal – increase return/take-back and disposal programs.
4. Effective enforcement to address “pill mills” and “doctor shopping.”



# Preventable Poisonings: Washington Poison Center Calls



- Medicines used in the home are the leading cause of poisonings, especially among children and seniors.
- More than half of all calls for kids under age six were about prescription medicines.
- Over 2,800 calls were from seniors calling about medications in 2009.

# Board of Health Subcommittee on Secure Medicine Return

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## Stakeholders included:

- Current providers or regulators of medicine take-back activities
- Pharmaceutical industry
- Organizations representing impacted residents
- Substance abuse professionals
- Health and medical organizations
- Community organizations
- Environmental groups

# Barriers to a Comprehensive Medicine Take-back System in King County:

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- **Challenges in collection of controlled substances** – help coming from new DEA draft regulation! authorizes take-back by retail pharmacies, manufacturers, drug distributors, and reverse distributors.
- **Convenience and access** – too few drop-off sites; too much of county unserved.
- **Financing** – lack of dedicated & adequate funding; very limited funding for education & promotion.
- **Lack of an efficient system** – no county-wide coordination.

# Overview of Secure Medicine Return Regulation

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- Drug manufacturers whose medicines are sold in or into King County for residential use (use in homes) are required to finance and provide the secure medicine return system.
- People will be able to bring leftover, expired, and unneeded medicines to secure drop boxes in retail pharmacies or law enforcement offices throughout the county.
- If a drop-off site is not available in a specific area then periodic collection events or prepaid return mailers will be provided.
- Prescription and over-the counter medicines will be accepted.
- Collected medicines must be securely handled, transported and disposed of according to federal & state laws and policies.
- PHSKC and LHWMP provide oversight to ensure safety and compliance.

# Secure Medicine Return Regulations: Next Steps in Implementation

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**Program start expected ~18 months from adoption of the Regulations on June 20, 2013.**

Current actions - contacting stakeholders and sending notification letters to obligated entities.

First compliance deadline is December 20, 2013 – each drug producer selling covered drugs in or into King County must indicate their intent to participate in a stewardship plan.

# Lessons learned

- Communities want this
- Use stories
- This is a nonpartisan issue.



## **Secure Medicine Return Regulations**

website: [www.KingCountySecureMedicineReturn.org](http://www.KingCountySecureMedicineReturn.org)

To receive email updates subscribe to:

<http://bit.ly/securemeds>

**Information & Resources on Medicine Take-back in WA  
& Product Stewardship:** [www.TakeBackYourMeds.org](http://www.TakeBackYourMeds.org)