

NEWS RELEASE

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Take Care WV RX Abuse Prevention Campaign Continues

*County Summits Convene and Pharmacies Use RX Bags w/
Don't Share Message This Month*

Data indicate social access (sharing) is a major contributor to the misuse of prescription drugs. According to the *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, **most prescription drug abusers obtain their drugs from family and friends.** In WV, 64% of nonmedical users of pain relievers reported getting the most recently used drug from a friend or relative for free, and another 7.6% reported buying them from a friend or relative.

Take Care West Virginia, a statewide prescription drug abuse prevention campaign, continues this month through county summits and pharmacy distribution of RX bags with the "Don't share RX medication." message.

"This campaign is aimed at changing social/culture norms about sharing prescription drugs," said Dr. Andy Whisman, Senior Evaluation Specialist with the WV Prevention Resource Center. "West Virginians are a caring people who want to help one another out when the can. Sharing prescriptions, however, is illegal and can be dangerous."

COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS/ COUNTY-WIDE SUMMITS: Three dozen (36) counties have partnered with the WV Prevention Resource Center and WV Center for Civic Life to convene multiple discussions and county-wide summits about what communities can do about prescription drug abuse. The community discussions took place across the state this summer, and the summits are set for this month. Additional information about these events (including dates/times/locations/forum participant booklets/forum starter video) is available at www.prevnet.org/communityforums.aspx.

RX BAGS FOR PHARMACIES: All of WV's 55 counties are participating in statewide use of pharmacy bags with the Take Care WV logo/website/message. Earlier this summer, county partners received large quantities of RX bags (the white paper ones you get your prescriptions in) to distribute to local pharmacies willing to participate. Most pharmacies, including many individual stores and major chains such as Rite Aid, Walmart/Sam's Club, Kroger, Fruth, are participating in this effort to make sure all West Virginians know it is illegal to share prescription medication, and RX misuse and abuse can be just as dangerous and deadly as illicit drug use. The bags also include the statement: Only take prescription medication as advised by your doctor.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS / WEBSITE: In addition to the forums/summits and RX bags, the Take Care WV campaign includes public service announcements (PSAs) and a website. Television, radio, and print ads were developed and are available to download online. During a five-week paid media placement earlier this summer the television PSAs aired more than 3,000 times on cable and broadcast stations across WV. The PSAs are also being distributed by local prevention and media partners. The website (www.takecarewv.org) links to all PSAs, RX drug facts/statistics, information about proper RX storage and disposal, and a link to the WV Prescription Drug Abuse Quitline.

The Take Care WV Campaign, developed and implemented by the WV Partnership to Promote Community Well-Being and the WV Prevention Resource Center, has been supported with funding from the following grants: *2009 Drug Free WV Grant, WV's federal Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG), and WV's federal Projects of Regional & National Significance (PRNS) Grant.* WV's SPF SIG and PRNS grants are federal grants from the U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

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