



Prescription Drug Abuse

The 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that 6.5 million people in the United States who are 12 years and older used prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them or in doses above what were prescribed to them (www.samhsa.gov).

In 2014 an estimated 467,000 (1.9% of adolescents) people age 12 to 17 were currently taking pain relief medications not prescribed to them or above what were prescribed to them. 103,000 (0.4% of adolescents) people age 12-17 were using tranquilizers not prescribed to them or above their prescribed doses. 41,000 (0.2% of adolescents) people age 12 to 17 were using sedatives not prescribed to them or in doses above what were prescribed to them. 169,000 (0.7% of adolescents) people age 12 to 17 were currently taking stimulant medications not prescribed to them or above their prescribed doses (www.samhsa.gov).

In 2015 there were 33,091 deaths in the United States from drug overdoses associated with opioid use. Opioids are a form of pain medication. Some common prescription opioids are methadone, oxycodone or Oxycontin and hydrocodone or Vicodin (www.cdc.gov).

Increased use of Heroin is linked to prescription opioid use. Heroin use rose by 75% between 2007 and 2011 with an 80% increase in first time use among people 12 to 17 years old (www.samhsa.gov).

Access to Prescription Medications

In a 2012 survey of persons 12 years and older who misused or abused opioid medications (www.CLAAD.org), they reported receiving the medication in the following ways:

- 54% from a friend or relative
- 19.7% prescribed by physician
- 10.9 % purchased from friend or relative
- 4.3% purchased from drug dealer or stranger
- 0.2% purchased on internet

Strategies for parents to reduce access to prescription medications

There are strategies a parent can take to reduce the access their children have to prescribed medications. Reducing access is one way to prevent abuse of prescription medication (www.drugfree.org).

- Keep track of all prescription medication in the home and keep track of pill quantities of those prescriptions.
- Secure prescription medications in an area outside of the medicine cabinet and in a location only the parent has knowledge of. Use locked cabinets where possible.
- Safely dispose of all expired or unused prescription medication.

Bucks County Medication Disposal Program for Prescription Medications

Bucks County has a medication disposal program that includes regular take back days in the community as well as medication drop boxes throughout our community.

Medications that can be placed in a drop box are as follow:

- Prescription and over-the-counter medications (tablets and capsules)
- Liquid medications, inhalers, creams, ointments, nasal sprays
- Pet medication

Products and medications NOT ACCEPTED in drop boxes are as follow:

- Injectable medications and needles
- Illicit substances such as marijuana or methamphetamine

The following is a list of some of the locations near you. You should call the location to check on location of box within facility and any specific drop off times.

Doylestown Township Police 425 Wells Rd Doylestown PA 18901 215-348-4201

Warrington Township Building 852 Easton Rd Warrington PA 18976 215-343-9350

Warwick Township Police 1733 Township Greene Jamison PA 18929 215-343-6102 ext. 411

New Britain Township Police 207 Park Ave Chalfont PA 18914 215-822-1910

Buckingham Township Police 4613 Hughesian Drive, Lower Level Buckingham PA 18912 215-794-8812

<http://www.buckscounty.org/LivingAndWorking/drugandalcoholcommission/MedicationDisposalProgram>

Additional resources for parents

ACT 53

ACT 53 is a law in the state of Pennsylvania. Act 53 allows a parent/legal guardian to get a drug and alcohol assessment for their child, and if warranted, compel the child to enter treatment.

<http://www.councilsepa.org/programs/student-assistance/act-53/>

ACT 139

Act 139 is legislation that allows first responders including law enforcement, fire fighters, EMS or other organizations the ability to administer a medication known as naloxone, a life-saving opioid reversal medication, to individuals experiencing an opioid overdose. The law also allows individuals such as friends or family members that may be in a position to assist a person at risk of experiencing an opioid related overdose to obtain a prescription for naloxone. Additionally, Act 139 provides immunity from prosecution for those responding to and reporting overdoses. Go to link below for more information on how to obtain a prescription for naloxone (Narcan).

<http://www.health.pa.gov/My%20Health/Diseases%20and%20Conditions/A-D/Pages/Act-139-of-2014.aspx#.WNkH9qK1vIU>