



Panhandle Health District

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Media Contact:
Katherine Hoyer
208-415-5108

NEWS RELEASE

Health District Hosts National Prescription Drug Take Back Day Event Panhandle Health District – April 23, 2024

Empty out your medicine cabinet this Saturday, April 27th, during National Prescription Drug Take Back Day! Panhandle Health District (PHD), in collaboration with Blue Cross of Idaho, is hosting a free and easy drop off from 10am-2pm at the Coeur d'Alene location of Blue Cross of Idaho, 1812 N. Lakewood Dr.

“All are welcome to drop by and dispose of unused medication and sharps safely,” said Makenna Hunziker, Project Coordinator at PHD and event coordinator. “The Take Back Day is easy, free and provides an opportunity for community members to safely and securely dispose of unused, expired, and unwanted prescription medications and help prevent substance misuse and overdose deaths.”

At the Take Back event, PHD staff will accept all unused and expired medication, not just opioids, in pill and liquid forms. The North Idaho Alliance of Care will also be participating in the event and will accept sharps that need disposed of and have their mobile HIV testing unit on site. All services are free and anonymous, no questions asked.

According to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, in 2021 the north Idaho region had two of the highest prescribing rates in the state.

“Holding onto expired or unused prescription medications increases the risk of misuse,” said Hunziker. “Help prevent prescription drug misuse by disposing of unused or expired medications this National Prescription Drug Take Back Day.”

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. According to the 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, **8.7 million people aged 12 or older misused prescription pain relievers in the past year.** The survey also showed that 44.9 percent of misused prescription drugs were obtained from a friend or relative (i.e. being given them, buying them, or taking them without asking).

If you are unable to make it to the event, there are several locations across the region that offer medication disposal services. Find a location near you:

<https://odp.idaho.gov/prescription-drug-take-back-program/>

#

Panhandle Health District provides over 40 different public health programs to families, individuals and organizations in northern Idaho. From food and drinking water safety to health education and disease control, public health services are critical to ensure our community is a safe and healthy place to live, work and play.

The PHD team is made up of nurses, nutritionists, environmental health specialists, health educators and many other dedicated professionals with a common goal to deliver vital public health services.

Panhandle Health District is one of seven health districts in the state of Idaho.