

<b>Date:</b> April 4, 2014	<b>BILL SUMMARY</b> PREPARED FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS	 <b>Health District</b> OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY
<b>Staff:</b> Kathryn Southard		

**HB14-1207 – CDPHE HOUSEHOLD MEDICATION TAKE-BACK PROGRAM  
CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE HOUSEHOLD MEDICATION TAKE-BACK PROGRAM**

**Bill Details**

<b>Bill Title:</b>	CDPHE Household Medication Take-back Program: Concerning the creation of the household medication take-back program
<b>Bill Sponsors:</b>	House – Young (D) Senate – Aguilar (D) and Newell (D)
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>House</b> – Health, Insurance, & Environment, Finance, and Appropriations Senate – Health and Human Services, Finance
<b>Bill History:</b>	03/26/2014 Senate Committee on Health & Human Services Refer Unamended to Finance

**Bill Summary**

HB14-1207 requires that the executive director of the Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) codify a household medication take-back program, already set up by CDPHE, to get rid of unused medications in order to curb prescription drug abuse in Colorado. The bill would allow individuals to dispose of these medications at collection sites and for transport of the medications from collection sites to disposal locations. The collection sites, carriers, and disposal locations are not subject to liability. The bill also creates a cash fund to implement the program which would be funded through gifts, grants, and donations. Currently no General Funds are being requested.

**Background**

Currently, the Division of Environmental Health and Sustainability within the CDPHE oversees the Colorado Medication Take-Back Project, which has been in effect since 2009 and currently provides 11 drop box locations. The local take-back boxes are paid for through grants and donations, but are primarily located in the Denver Metro Area. According to CDPHE, since 2009, 35,000 pounds of household medications have been collected. Only DEA sanctioned drop-off days and law enforcement agencies can currently accept narcotics.

According to current estimates, Colorado ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> worst among states for the abuse of prescription painkillers, with 6 percent of Coloradans 12 and older reporting nonmedical use in 2011.<sup>1</sup> According to SAMHSA, of those who reported abusing prescription pain killers, 54 percent reported getting the drug from a friend or relative for free, 10.9 percent bought from a friend or relative, and 4 percent took from a friend or relative without asking.<sup>2</sup> Removing unused medications from homes may help limit access to, and reduce abuse of, unused prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medication take-back programs are an important component of a comprehensive strategy to prevent drug abuse and diversion. Drug take-back programs provide a way for people to safely dispose of prescription and over-the-counter drugs that are no longer needed. Take-back programs assist in reducing the available supply of household medications by working to decrease diversion of prescription and nonprescription medication, reduce accidental poisonings, and mitigate environmental hazards caused by flushing prescription medications.

Environmentally, medication take-back programs are essential as low levels of pharmaceutical ingredients have been found in water supplies, potentially affecting wildlife and humans.<sup>3</sup> Improper disposal of

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medications by flushing or trash can cause active ingredients to leach into the water supply.<sup>4</sup> Medications that the Colorado Medication Take-Back Project receives are disposed of in an “environmentally protective manner.”<sup>5</sup>

There has been very little research conducted on whether medication take-back programs actually reduce prescription drug abuse.<sup>6</sup> Some postulate that since only 4 percent of those misusing opioids obtain drugs by stealing from friends or family that take-back programs may not be the most effective way to reduce substance abuse.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, many medication take-back programs, such as most of those proposed in Colorado, are unable to accept narcotics because of federal law. Some take-back programs operated in concert with law enforcement agencies are able to accept narcotics, but these are currently the exception. Three-quarters of all deaths from prescription drugs are caused by prescription pain killers.<sup>8</sup>

### About this Summary

This summary was prepared by Health District of Northern Larimer County staff to assist the Health District Board of Directors in determining whether to take an official stand on various health-related issues. The Health District is a special district of the northern two-thirds of Larimer County, Colorado, supported by local property tax dollars and governed by a publicly elected five-member board. The Health District provides medical, mental health, dental, preventive and health planning services to the communities it serves. For more information about this summary or the Health District, please contact Dan Sapienza, Policy Coordinator, at (970) 224-5209, or e-mail at dsapienza@healthdistrict.org.

<sup>1</sup> State of Colorado. (2013). Colorado plan to reduce prescription drug abuse. *State of Colorado*. Retrieved from <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&blobheadername2=Content-Type&blobheadervalue1=inline%3B+filename%3D%22Colorado+Plan+to+Reduce+Prescription+Drug+Abuse.pdf%22&blobheadervalue2=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1251904827503&ssbinary=true>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2012SummNatFindDetTables/NationalFindings/NSDUHresults2012.htm>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.deaiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/non\\_registrant/rdellinger.pdf](http://www.deaiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/non_registrant/rdellinger.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&blobheadername2=Content-Type&blobheadervalue1=inline%3B+filename%3D%22Medication+Take+Back+Brochure.pdf%22&blobheadervalue2=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1251914523758&ssbinary=true>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&blobheadername2=Content-Type&blobheadervalue1=inline%3B+filename%3D%22Medication+Take+Back+Brochure.pdf%22&blobheadervalue2=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1251914523758&ssbinary=true>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.carnevaleassociates.com/prescription\\_drug\\_takeback\\_programs\\_&\\_substance\\_abuse\\_prevention.pdf](http://www.carnevaleassociates.com/prescription_drug_takeback_programs_&_substance_abuse_prevention.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.carnevaleassociates.com/takebacks>

<sup>8</sup> CDC. (2012). Polic impact: prescription pain killer overdoses. *Injury and Prevention Control*. Retrieved from [cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/rxbrief](http://cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/rxbrief)