Overview of Pharmaceutical Stewardship Policies

How Medicine Take-Back Programs Work

Medicines Manufactured → Purchased by Consumers → Some Medicines Used - Some Leftover & Expired → Unused Medicines Returned to Secure Drop Boxes → Incinerated

Under a pharmaceutical stewardship policy, the companies that make the medicines finance and operate the medicine take-back program. This relieves the burden on local government and law enforcement, and provides sustainable funding for a more convenient program for consumers.

Some of The Stakeholders

**Pharmaceutical Producers** make prescription and over-the-counter drugs, both brand name and generic. They are required to provide a secure, convenient medicine take-back program meeting requirements of county law and in compliance with federal and state laws. Typically, each producer contributes money to a stewardship organization that operates the program.

**Stewardship Organizations** work on behalf of producers to plan, organize, finance, coordinate and promote collection of medicines at secure drop boxes. Collected medicines are securely transported and properly disposed of at a permitted high temperature incineration facility.

**Pharmacies** can volunteer to host a secure drop box provided by the producers’ program. Hospitals, police, and other qualified collectors can also host a drop box.

**Consumers** drop off unused medicines in secure boxes located at pharmacies, hospitals, and police stations. Producers cannot charge a fee for secure disposal when medicines are purchased or returned.

**Snohomish Health District** staff review stewardship plans, provide oversight of the approved plans, and work with other local partners and cities to help promote the program.

This overview is a simplified description of the proposed pharmaceutical stewardship policy for Snohomish County. To learn more, please visit www.snohd.org.