

Volunteer Guide

In collaboration with Michigan OPEN, thank you for volunteering at our community Medication Take Back Event! Volunteers are essential for the success of our event!

Our goals are twofold:

- To take unused medications, especially opioids, out of people's homes where they can be misused and abused
- To educate our community on how to safely store and dispose of opioids

The overall process on the day of the event is the following:

- Participants (those bringing in their medications for disposal) need to be greeted enthusiastically.
- Volunteers will collect information regarding 'Medications of Interest' at the workstations. How this is done will be decided ahead of time and consists of either estimating the number of pills participants bring in or counting the exact number of pills.
- Volunteers will ask remaining questions from the Michigan OPEN questionnaire.
- Lastly, encourage participants to take any informational brochures on safe storage and disposal of opioids, or any other community brochures at the workstations.

GREETER VOLUNTEER

For larger take back events, the participants may be greeted by a volunteer who directs them to open workstations for medication disposal. This volunteer helps maintain an efficient flow of participant traffic.

WORKSTATION VOLUNTEERS

The volunteers at the workstations greet the participant and initiates the questionnaire and collecting information on the Medications of Interest.

SUGGESTED SCRIPT: *"Hello! Thanks for coming out to our Medication Take Back Event. Can we ask you a few questions? We are collecting data on the types of medications being disposed of today."* Participation is voluntary and they do not have to answer any questions if they decline.

SCRIPT: *"Volunteers are not supposed to touch any of the medications, so could you please place the pill bottles with the labels facing me on this plastic tray?"* (If the customer does not want you to see their information, ask them if they would prefer to black out their personal information first, as you just need the type of medication.) Participants should never feel pressured into providing any information if they appear uncomfortable.

Compare the participants' medications to the alphabetized Medication of Interest list. Do not touch the containers while they have pills in them.

For each medication on the list (NOTE: Your event organizer will let you know which method is being used):

- a. Have the participant estimate the number of pills left in the bottle.

OR

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- b. Have the participant *pour the pills* onto the tray. Wearing gloves and using a tongue depressor count the number of pills. **Wipe down the tray in between participants.**

Have participant mark off all personal and refill information from bottle label and then (NOTE: Your event organizer will let you know which method is being used):

- a. Bottle & lid may be deposited with the pills into the drop box
OR
- b. Bottle & lid may be recycled or thrown away
- c. Participant may choose to take bottles. (Provide a Ziploc bag)

After all medications are estimated/counted or not on the list,

- a. Finish asking the final questions from the questionnaire, then
- b. Prompt the participant to take the plastic tray with their medication to the police officer standing at the medication disposal box. If the participant needs assistance with carrying their tray, ask the second officer to please assist. **Volunteers cannot take the tray to the officer.**
- c. The police officer will direct the participant to dispose their medications directly into the medication drop box.

After all medications have been deposited into the medication drop box, provide participants with available educational brochure and thank them for participating!

OTHER:

Participants with questions regarding what is done with the collected medications can be directed to the police officer.

Participants may have questions related to disposal of those items not accepted (liquids, sharps, inhalers). If possible, be prepared with written materials at the workstation identifying locations/facilities that will take these items.

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