



Medication Disposal

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National Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Take Back Day is October 29, 2022



As part of the patient discharge plan, be sure to include safe disposal sites for unwanted or expired medications in your community. Use the [DEA collection site locator](#) to find a site near you.

Phase Three Mega Rule Requirements Effective October 24, 2022

Fentanyl patch disposal

- Requirements for facility compliance with F-tag implication: F755 will be in effect.
- State and local laws may restrict flushing of pharmaceuticals, including fentanyl patches.
- Nursing homes may use drug disposal systems if they can show the system minimizes accidental exposure and diversion.
- Ensure fentanyl patches are not disposed of in common areas, resident room trash cans or sharps containers due to potential for accidental exposure or diversion.

Disposal of Medication in Long-Term Care Settings

F-tag 755 regulation charges facilities with establishing secure and safe methods for disposal of controlled medications to prevent diversion and/or accidental exposure. Safe practices may include the utilization of an alternative chemical medication disposal solution that can be purchased through your medical supplier. Once the solution is activated, it can be thrown in the trash.

Disposal of controlled substances in both long-term care facilities and in-home care settings is an issue in the United States. Cited in the 2017 ProPublica article "[America's Other Drug Problem](#)," a 2015 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study estimated that nursing homes and **long-term care facilities dispose of 740 million tons of medications each year**. The article details how improper disposal of controlled medications has been a long-standing issue.

According to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#), nearly **92,000 people died** from a drug-involved (including illicit drugs and prescription opioids) overdose in the United States in 2020. An increase of more than 20,000 deaths from 2019.

Alternative Chemical Medication Disposal

Medication disposal systems are becoming available to directly deactivate medications and reduce harm to the environment. These proprietary systems (e.g., Rx Destroyer, Deterra® Drug Disposal System, Drug Buster) allow the disposal of unwanted nonhazardous medications (including liquids, tablets, capsules and transdermal patches) by placing products in a disposal pouch, bottle or other container, and discarding them directly in the trash.

visit www.mpghf.org/QIO for more resources.

This material was prepared by Mountain-Pacific Quality Health, a Medicare Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO), under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of CMS or HHS, and any reference to a specific product or entity herein does not constitute endorsement of that product or entity by CMS or HHS. 12SOW-MPGHF-AS-NH-10/22-201



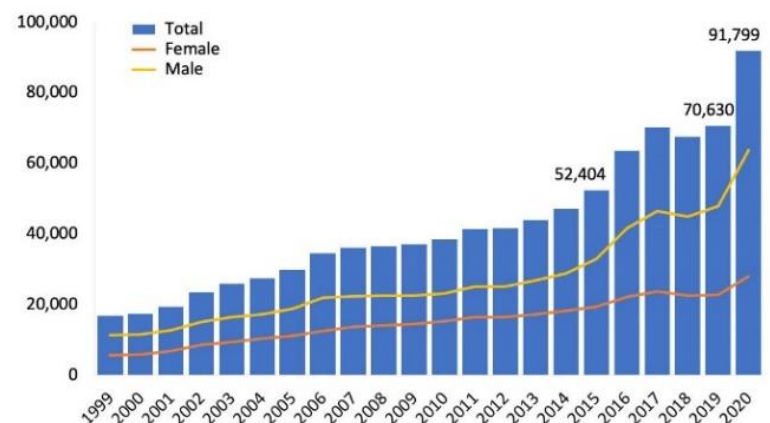
Pharmacists Corner

Secure and proper disposal of unwanted medication is a key prevention strategy in reducing misuse and diversion in long-term care settings.

Resources

- Deterra® is providing free [disposal pouches](#) in October
- U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) safe opioid disposal "[Remove the Risk Outreach Toolkit](#)"
- Walgreens #itENDSwithUS campaign for finding a safe [medication disposal kiosk](#) or option for disposal in every Walgreens Pharmacy in the country

Figure 1. National Drug-Involved Overdose Deaths*
Number Among All Ages, by Gender, 1999-2020



*Includes deaths with underlying causes of unintentional drug poisoning (X40-X44), suicide drug poisoning (X60-X64), homicide drug poisoning (X85), or drug poisoning of undetermined intent (Y10-Y14), as coded in the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2020 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 12/2021.