



Pharmacy Safe Storage Program

Research with Washington residents shows that although people know they should lock up their medications, only about 26% actually do. In 2020, the Washington State Health Care Authority piloted a pharmacy-based program to test whether making a personal commitment to lock up medications would influence consumer behavior.

The results underscored the power pharmacies have to encourage safe medication storage and return.

Following the proven success of the pilot program, the Pharmacy Safe Storage Program has expanded each year, reaching over 14 counties in Washington. Over the course of a four-month period, pharmacists ask their patients who receive an opioid prescription if they have a way to lock up their medication, provide a free locking bag if they do not, and ask for their commitment to safely store their prescription.



TO DATE:

2,824
PEOPLE

have been talked to about safe storage.

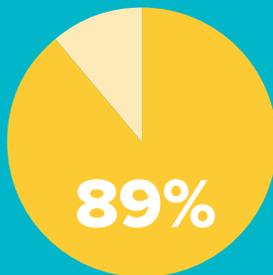
1,748
PEOPLE

pledged to lock up their medications.

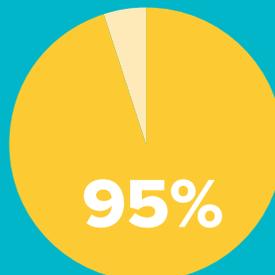
1,452
LOCKING BAGS

have been distributed to patients with opioid prescriptions.

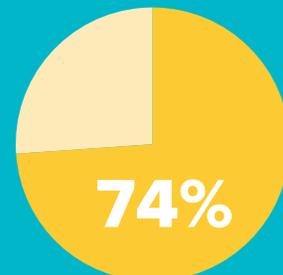
57 PATIENTS PARTICIPATED IN A FOLLOW UP SURVEY IN YEAR ONE:



of respondents said they committed to locking their medication.



of respondents who received a locking bag used it.



of respondents said the conversation with their pharmacist influenced their behavior.

Pharmacists play a key role in safe storage and safe disposal.

Nearly half of people misusing pain relievers, including prescription opioids, get them from a friend or family member. This program relies on pharmacists' influence in their communities and highlights their ability to prompt patients to adopt healthy behaviors like locking up. This in turn helps to prevent opioid misuse.

By having conversations about safe storage and safe disposal, pharmacists can make a big difference in keeping people safe and their communities healthy.

“ If every pharmacy across Washington state participated in the safe storage program, we could make a significant impact in ensuring opioid medications are safely stored - therefore decreasing the risk of misuse and helping to substantially address the opioid epidemic. ”

– Alicia Hughes, MA, CPP, Supervisor, Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Washington State Health Care Authority

“ It was worthwhile to initiate a conversation with individuals regarding the importance of safe storage of their opioid medications. This is another great way that pharmacies can help out their communities and spread awareness. ”

– Catherine Nguyen, Clinical Pharmacist at Peninsula Community Health Services, Program Participant

Get Involved

Pharmacies across Washington can participate in this free program!

Participating pharmacies will receive:

- A supply of free locking bags to provide to patients who receive opioid prescriptions.
- Promotional materials including posters, informational rack cards, ready-to-use social media posts, eNews content and pledge forms.
- Promotion of your pharmacy's involvement within your market area through media relations and social media.
- Ongoing support to ensure a straight-forward and smooth implementation of the program.
- Sign up at [GetTheFactsRx.com/Pharmacy](https://www.getthefactsrx.com/pharmacy)



**FOR INFORMATION
OR TO PARTICIPATE:**

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