Objectives

1. To describe the interprofessional implementation process and programmatic outcomes of an inaugural drug take-back event on a university campus.

2. To quantify donated medications and summarize donor demographics.

Implementation

- DIDARP graduate assistants collaborated with Generation Rx from the ETSU Gatton College of Pharmacy and gained University approval to conduct a drug take-back event on campus.
- Coordinated the event to take place the Thursday before the National DEA Take-Back Day.
- Local law enforcement were coordinated to attend the drug take-back event.
- Collaborated with the ETSU Farmers Market and the ETSU Student Government Association for financial support, communication with the campus community and a location for the drug take-back event.
- Conducted marketing efforts in collaboration with the following entities:
  - ETSU Public Relations
  - ETSU Student Government Association
  - ETSU Gatton College of Pharmacy

Results

- Number of Drug Take-Back Event Volunteers From Each Healthcare Discipline (N = 18):
  - Student Pharmacists
  - Masters of Public Health Students
  - ETSU College of Pharmacy Faculty
  - Pharmacy Practice Research Fellows
  - Doctor of Public Health Students
  - ETSU Staff

- Breakdown of Donated Prescriptions (N = 42 donors and 580 prescriptions):
  - Non-controlled Substances: 417, 68%
  - Controlled Substances: 69, 12%
  - Stimulants, 6, 10%
  - Opiates, 50, 9%
  - Other Controlled Substances, 17, 3%

Discussion

- ETSU is a public university located in Johnson City, Tennessee currently enrolling over 15,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students.\(^1\) The university’s strategic plan includes increasing support and enhancing scholarship through research, service and creative activity, as well as expanding community service-related activities.

- Development and implementation of the inaugural drug take-back event at ETSU took four months from start to finish and was purposely scheduled to align with marketing opportunities on campus and in conjunction with the DEA National Drug Take-Back Day.

- Successful implementation of the event was achieved through interprofessional collaboration between the ETSU Colleges of Pharmacy and Public Health, along with participation from other ETSU entities including the DIDARP research team, Generation Rx, the ETSU Farmers Market, Student Government, Public Relations, Buctainment, the East Tennessean and local law enforcement.

- Student pharmacists represented the largest proportion of volunteers at the drug take-back event. The event provided an opportunity to educate students about safe handling of prescription drugs while also facilitating a valuable experience for student pharmacists to work alongside public health students in order to address a major health problem in their community.

- Although 50 pounds of prescription drugs were donated during the event, with controlled substances accounted for 4 pounds or 8 percent by weight, it is hypothesized by the authors that a student, faculty and staff focused take-back event may be more successful if scheduled at the end of the semester or school year.

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Additional Information

- Background
  - Prescription drug abuse and misuse is one of the fastest growing drug problems in the nation. In particular, nonmedical use of prescription stimulants (e.g., Adderall®/Ritalin®) is a major health concern at US colleges and universities, and studies have shown that nonmedical use of prescription stimulants by college students has nearly doubled between 2001 and 2013.\(^2\)

  - A recent study conducted at East Tennessee State University (ETSU) reported that 1 in 10 health care students from the medical, pharmacy, and respiratory therapy disciplines have nonmedically used prescription stimulants.\(^3\)

  - The Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan put forth by the ETSU Diversity-promoting Institutions Drug Abuse Research (ETSU) reported that 1 in 10 health care students from the medical, pharmacy, and respiratory therapy disciplines have nonmedically used prescription stimulants.\(^4\)

- Background
  - A growing epidemic including proper disposal of unused or unwanted prescription drugs.\(^5\)

  - National drug take-back events have played an instrumental role in decreasing access to prescription drugs, however these events do not generally take place on university campuses. Proximity to drug take-back events could be important to student donors, given that a recent study found that drug take-back donors are unlikely to travel large distances to properly dispose of their medications.\(^6\)

- Background
  - In order to engage college students and create awareness of the problem of prescription drug abuse and misuse, the ETSU Diversity-promoting Institutions Drug Abuse Research Program (DIDARP) put forth a collaborative effort with other students and healthcare professionals to develop and implement the first drug take-back event at ETSU.

- Objectives
  - To describe the interprofessional implementation process and programmatic outcomes of an inaugural drug take-back event on a university campus.

  - To quantify donated medications and summarize donor demographics.

References


