

**NOMINATION FORM**  
**COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION RECOGNITION**  
**NEBRASKA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH**

**Program Title:** Nebraska MEDS (Medication Education for Disposal Strategies) Disposal Program - Protecting Nebraska's Water & People

**Where Program is Conducted:** Lancaster County

**Sponsoring Entity:** Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department in partnership with the Nebraska MEDS Coalition

**Program Contact Person:** Willa Tharnish

**Organization:** Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD)

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**Person Submitting Nomination:** Marcia Mueting

**Organization:** Nebraska Pharmacists Association

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Nominations are accepted on a continuous basis.

Submit nominations to: State Board of Health

DHHS Division of Public Health/Licensure Unit

PO Box 95007

Lincoln, NE 68509-5007

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**Please briefly describe your program below, and then complete the attached questions.**

The LLCHD successfully piloted a program for efficient and effective approaches to better manage unwanted medication, with the support of the Nebraska MEDS Coalition. Through grant funding from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, the program has supplied pharmacies in Lancaster County with containers at no charge to collect unwanted, non-controlled medications from patients. Grant funding also supported DEA-sponsored Take Back Events in Lancaster County. Lessons learned from this pilot program are being applied in a statewide effort which will begin in January of 2015.

*Please answer the following questions to assist the State Board of Health in reviewing your nomination. Materials that support the nomination, such as news clippings, brochures, etc. may be attached.*

**1. What community need(s) is being addressed by this program?**

This program worked to confront the environmental and public health challenges of emerging contaminants /unwanted medications in our state. The primary objective was to protect the natural environment and human health by creating a uniform, comprehensive and long-term model for the safe and legal management of pharmaceutical waste from households. Education efforts focused on avoiding the flushing of unwanted medications to protect the environment and public health.

**2. What methods are used to carry out the program/initiative?**

Pharmacies in Lancaster County volunteered to participate as a collection site for unwanted, non-controlled medications. Each pharmacy was provided collection containers, training and patient education materials. Marketing and financial resources were provided to support the DEA Take Back Days, allowing Lancaster County to several sites for the return of unwanted medications to local law enforcement.

**3. Has the program collaborated with other public or private agencies in the planning, implementation or evaluation of this program? If so, please list the collaborating agencies and describe how this relationship has benefitted the program and program recipients.**

This coalition is comprised of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, Nebraska Pharmacists Association, Groundwater Foundation, Nebraska Regional Poison Center, and Lancaster County Sheriff's office. Other partners include Guardian Angels, Dillon's House, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County, Lincoln Public School Nurses, LiveWise Coalition, and WasteCap of Nebraska. Each partner has a stake in safe medication disposal and together, the coalition can cast a broad net to interested individuals for education of the public and interested stakeholders.

**4. Please supply any data or other evidence which documents the effectiveness of the program and the benefits received by the community as a result of the program/initiative.**

From August of 2012 through September of 2014, 5,317 pounds of unwanted medications were collected by approximately 40 pharmacies in Lancaster County. During the DEA Take Back Days in 7,958 pounds were collected in Lancaster County. These medications were removed from medicine cabinets and diverted from the water supply and from landfills.

**5. How is this program/initiative funded? Please describe staff and volunteer commitment to the program.**

The pilot project was funded by a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust. These monies supported a Project Manager and support staff at the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. Many hours of in-kind support were committed by the Groundwater Foundation, Nebraska Regional Poison Center, and Nebraska Pharmacists Association to guide the project. Staff at the participating pharmacies volunteered their time to receive medications from patients and manage the ordering and shipping of containers.

**6. Please describe how this program/initiative is unique and creative in its approach.**

Previous initiatives encouraged patients to "save" unwanted medications until a semi-annual event occurred in their area. The coalition realized the importance removing unwanted medications as soon as possible when a consumer no longer wants the medication in their home. It is convenient for patients to bring unwanted medications to a pharmacy for disposal. Many pharmacists reported positive interactions with patients to discuss why the medication was not taken.