



The North Dakota Prescription Drug Repository is a program that dates back to 2006 when the American Cancer Society reached out to the North Dakota State Board of Pharmacy to develop a program that obtains voluntarily donated medications, devices, and supplies from the public. It allows participating pharmacies to redistribute these items back to those in need. From this conversation in 2006, former North Dakota Governor and current United States Senator, John Hoeven, signed House Bill 1256 in April of 2007. A short time later in July of 2007, the bill took effect. Since then, the program has allowed individuals to get rid of unwanted medications, avoid pharmaceutical waste that can harm the environment and provide others with medications at an affordable price.

Where can one donate or obtain these medications?

Registered pharmacies and practitioners may accept the medications, devices, and/or supplies that fit the following criteria: items must be in the original, unopened, sealed, and tamper-evident unit dose packaging, except a drug packaged in single-unit doses may be accepted and dispensed if the outside packaging has been opened and the single-unit-dose package is unopened. Examples of single-unit doses would be medications in blister packs/punch cards or nebulizer capsules.

To find out what registered pharmacies or practitioners participate in the program for North Dakota, one can visit the North Dakota State Board of Pharmacy website at www.nodakpharmacy.com. After scrolling down slightly, an image for the Drug Repository Program will appear on the right-hand side of the screen. Clicking on this image will take you to the main page for the program. From here, one can click on the “Search for a Donated Drug or Supply” or the “Search for a Participating Pharmacy or Prescriber.” Both of which are found under the Searches header. The latter of these two options pulls up an alphabetical list of all the participating pharmacies and practitioners in the state of North Dakota. Clicking on the name of the location displays all the medications they currently have on hand through the repository program. To look up a specific medication, go to the “Search for a Donated Drug or Supply” tab. Here one can search by the medication’s name and/or by a certain location to see if they have any current supply. The website also shows users the name of the medication, device, supply, strength of the drug, and expiration date. Clicking on the name of the pharmacy participant again will bring up the store’s contact information.

What does one need to participate in the repository program?

Both donors and recipients must provide their name, address, and a signature. Donors must also provide a telephone number and the name of the patient for whom the medication was originally prescribed to. Recipients must also have a valid prescription from their provider for the medication they wish to obtain. No insurance is required to participate in this program. The forms for both donors and recipients can be found on the main page of the drug repository program that is located on the North Dakota Board of Pharmacy website. If one is interested in receiving long term prescription assistance, the “Prescription Connection” link at the bottom of this same page will connect patients with the North Dakota Insurance Department. This program helps people of all ages in obtaining free or discounted medications.

How does this program reduce costs for patients?

When a medication, device, or supplies are donated to the program, the pharmacy cannot resell the medication. Instead, the pharmacy may redistribute the medication at no charge or only charge a small

dispensing fee. This fee has a maximum cost of 2.5 times \$4.60, which equates to \$11.50. For certain medications such as insulin, diabetic testing supplies, or inhalers the cost savings can be enormous.

Increasing drug prices continue to be an area of debate and have left lawmakers struggling to come up with a solution. The drug repository program is one way that pharmacists and practitioners may provide patients with affordable medications so they may get the necessary treatments. It is equally important that patients donating medications know about this program as it is for recipients looking to obtain the medication. Without donations from patients, nursing homes, hospitals, and local hospices, the program is unable to function. The drug repository program can significantly reduce costs for patients, but it is only as effective as the people who know about it.

If you have any further questions, please go to www.nodakpharmacy.com, or ask your local pharmacist.