



Making a difference...together

**REPORT TO SAANICH PENINSULA WASTEWATER COMMISSION
MEETING OF FRIDAY, JUNE 18, 2010**

SUBJECT DISPOSAL OF UNUSED MEDICATIONS – HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SITES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the staff report is to provide the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission (SPWWC) with information on the disposal of unused pharmaceuticals and other medications collected from home and community care sites located within the district.

BACKGROUND

Staff had previously reported to the SPWWC on September 17, 2009 that four Vancouver Island Health authority (VIHA) hospitals (including Saanich Peninsula Hospital) have been operating under Regional Source Control program (RSCP) waste discharge permits since 2006. These permits include requirements for collection of unused pharmaceuticals for proper off-site disposal. RSCP inspections to date have confirmed that these requirements are being met at all hospitals.

A medications return campaign, aimed at reducing the amounts of expired or unused pharmaceuticals disposed into local sewers and solid waste streams by CRD residents, was launched by the RSCP in March 2008. This initiative promoted awareness of the existing provincial Medications Return Program (MRP) and participating pharmacies within the district. Results from follow-up surveys have indicated that the campaign was a success. Further advertising and outreach in support of this initiative has been ongoing within the district in 2009 and 2010. The next campaign survey is scheduled for early 2011.

At the SPWWC meeting held on February 18, 2010 a question was raised as to how assisted living and in-home care sites in the region were disposing of unused pharmaceuticals. RSCP staff has researched this matter and have the following information to report:

- Pharmacists working with facilities licensed under either the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* or the *Hospital Act* are required, under College of Pharmacists of BC Bylaws, to accept returned/unused medications for proper disposal through the provincial MRP.
- In December 2008, VIHA issued a document recommending procedures for the safe disposal of unused medications from home and community care sites through the provincial MRP. This document (attached) was intended as a guide for VIHA clinicians working in unlicensed community care, assisted living and private in-home care situations.

The extent to which the above bylaws and the VIHA recommendations are being followed by pharmacists and clinicians is not known at this time. VIHA Health and Community Care staff have expressed an interest in working with the RSCP to develop and distribute specific “medications return” outreach information focused on increasing capture rates for unused medications at both licensed and unlicensed Home and Community Care sites.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development and distribution of specific “medications return” outreach information to both licensed and unlicensed Home and Community Care sites is estimated to cost approximately \$10,000.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Commission:

1. receive this report for information, and
2. consider a proposal for a specific “medications return” outreach initiative for both licensed and unlicensed Home and Community Care sites to be included in the 2011 RSCP outreach budget at an estimated cost of \$10,000.

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Attachment: 1

TS/hr