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Aurora Health Care, Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers and Fund for Lake Michigan

Team Up to Dispose of Unused Medicine

Health and Environmental Leaders Bring New Drop Box to Milwaukee's South Side

MILWAUKEE – A ground-breaking collaboration between health and environmental leaders is bringing a new drop box for unused medicine to Milwaukee's South Side, in Sixteenth Street Community Health Center's Parkway Clinic and Aurora Pharmacy located at 2906 S. 20th Street, Milwaukee. The Fund for Lake Michigan is paying the cost of placing the drop box there.

Today's announcement marks the first time in Southeast Wisconsin that a drop box at a pharmacy will be embedded in a clinic. It is the third drop box Aurora has placed in its facilities; other drop boxes are located at the Outpatient Pharmacy at Aurora Sinai Medical Center and at Aurora West Allis Medical Center.

"Ninety one Americans die every day from an opioid overdose, 77% of opioid medications taken by new users are obtained by a friend or relative, and opioid overdose is the leading cause of non-natural death in Milwaukee County," said Prati Wojtal, Director of Ambulatory Pharmacy Services for Aurora Health Care. "These are alarming statistics and the reason why Aurora Health Care and Aurora Pharmacy are taking the lead on making drop boxes available so that anyone can safely dispose of unused medications."

"There is an opioid crisis in the city, state and country, and safely disposing of unused medicine is something each of us can do to help combat this crisis," said Julie Schuller, President and CEO of Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers. "We are excited to be able to offer this drop box to our patients, their families and the community."

"Sewage treatment plants cannot effectively treat unused medicines flushed down the toilet and as a result more than 30 different chemicals have now been detected in Lake Michigan near Milwaukee," says Vicki Elkin, executive director of the Fund for Lake Michigan. "This new drop box will address that pollution problem while also helping to fight opioid abuse by getting prescription drugs safely out of circulation."

"This drop box will keep nearly 200 pounds of medicine out of the lake every year and also combat the opioid crisis in Milwaukee," said Jon Richards, coalition director of Take Back My Meds MKE. A map of all drug take back locations in Milwaukee County, can be found at takebackmymeds.com.

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