STRATEGY 4 – Change Access & Barriers

Improve systems and processes to increase access to Rx abuse prevention, treatment and recovery services. These strategies can also include imposing barriers that make it harder for individuals to engage in illegal or unhealthy behaviors such as the implementation of drug take-back programs and the use of lock boxes.

Target the general public, retail stores, health care professionals, law enforcement officials, educators and public health officials.

Print out this document and check off the strategies that are most relevant to your community.

- Create and implement ongoing drug disposal/take-back programs. Provide information to consumers about how to safely dispose of medications when programs are not available or accessible.
- Collaborate with law enforcement personnel and health care professionals on creating community-specific drug disposal programs.
- Help ensure that drug take-back events are launched in locations that are frequented by community residents, e.g., city parks, local farmers markets, libraries, large retail department stores.
  - Recruit a wide range of businesses to post flyers and other collateral. Include banks, doctor and dentist offices, hospitals, walk-in health clinics, veterinary practices, convenience stores and coffee shops.
  - Recruit new partners to become collection sites—veterinarians, dentists, physicians, emergency walk-in clinics, hospital (emergency rooms)—and community centers.
    - Provide training on proper storage and liability.
    - Help promote the new collection sites.
    - Create linkages between these new partners and drug disposal companies.
- Consider innovative ways to collect unused or expired medicines, including the postal service, UPS or FedEx.
- Collaborate with delivery companies such as UPS or FedEx to ensure that medications reach the customers that order them.
- Create strategies that support better coordination and training among health care professionals that will help ensure safe prescribing practices and tracking of drug interactions.
- To prevent diversion, ensure that realtors and sellers prevent access to their prescription medicines when they are holding open houses.
- Make sure homeowners prevent access to their prescription medicines when strangers are in and around their homes.
- Identify where and when Rx medications are typically abused—is in the city park at night; in the parking lot of a local convenience store after school; in peoples’ homes on the weekends; on the beach during spring break? Ensure a greater law enforcement presence at these locations.
locations and times.

- Promote the availability of treatment and recovery hotlines to businesses in your community.
- Collaborate with local universities and community colleges to create holistic stress-relieving and study enhancement strategies such as access to exercise classes, tai chi and massage therapists.
- Create and disseminate Rx abuse prevention, treatment and referral information in different languages, and provide language interpretation/translation during workshops and other training events.
- Identify potential funders to fund reduced or eliminated co-payments for Rx addiction treatment and recovery services.