COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Prevention & Outreach Division

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rx Drug Take-Back Day Aims to Reduce SLO County Risk of Accidents and Abuse

San Luis Obispo—To reduce our community's risk of prescription drug misuse and accidental overdose, the County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Department invites you to clean out your medicine cabinet and drop off unused medication at Rx Drug Take-Back Day this Saturday, Oct. 28.

"Simply put, medicines that are stored and disposed of properly aren't available for accidents or misuse," said Ashley Jones, Drug-Free Communities Coordinator for the County of San Luis Obispo Health Agency. "Last year, we took back more than 400 pounds of medication in four hours—and this year we're hoping to double that."

Prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, medicated ointments, inhalers, and even liquid medication in leak-proof containers will be accepted for drop-off.

WHAT: Rx Drug Take-Back Day in SLO County

WHEN: Saturday, October 28, 2017, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

WHERE: Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center, at the carpool parking lot on Casa Street, in San Luis Obispo

WHO: All residents are invited to drop off unwanted medications. This event is a collaboration of the County of San Luis Obispo, SLO Opioid Safety Coalition, City of San Luis Obispo Police Department, California Highway Patrol, Aegis Treatment Centers, and the U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

WHY: Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S., surpassing even car collisions. In San Luis Obispo County, opioid-related overdose deaths more than doubled from 2006 to 2015, affecting community members of all ages. Disposing of unused medication removes the risk that it will be accidentally ingested, redirected, or misused. It also keeps medication out of the natural environment.

PLUS: Get a free flu shot! The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department will be providing free flu shots on-site at the event. The CDC recommends that everyone over six months of age get the flu shot by the end of October.

Rx Drug Take-Back Days are hosted by communities nationwide on this day. The DEA reports that over 8.1 million pounds of drugs have been taken back since the event began seven years ago.

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Quick Tips: Safe Medication Storage + Disposal

The County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Department reminds residents to safely store and dispose of medication year-round.

Safe Storage. Keep medication safe and secure at home:
- Take an inventory of the medications in your home every six months.
- Store your medicine someplace that is convenient for you, but out of plain sight and not easily accessible to others.
- Choose a location that is cool and dry. The bathroom is usually not a good place to store medicine, as it is often hot and humid.
- For opioids and ADHD medication, consider storing these in a locked or well-hidden location. These medications are the most commonly misused by adolescents.
- After you take your medication, put it back in its place. Never leave your medicine bottle out on a table or counter.
- Keep your medicine in the bottle it came in, so you do not confuse it with a different medication. If you use a weekly pill box, keep the original bottles so you can refer back to the dosing instructions, refill information, and expiration date. Never mix different medications in the same bottle.

Safe Disposal. When medicine is expired or no longer needed:
- On **Saturday, October 28**, drop off old or unused medication at Rx Drug Take-Back Day at Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center (at the carpool parking lot on Casa Street) in SLO, from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. You can bring in old prescriptions, expired over-the-counter medicines and even old inhalers. Questions? Call 805-781-4278.
- Ask the pharmacist for a safe disposal "take-back" envelope when you fill your prescription. All pharmacies in SLO County either have a drug take-back kiosk or will give you an envelope that is postage paid and pre-addressed to a safe drug disposal facility.
- Visit DisposeMyMeds.org to find other authorized medicine disposal locations near you.

By safely storing and disposing of your medication, you'll be doing your part to prevent accidental poisonings and unsafe drug use here in SLO County. Learn more about local overdose prevention efforts at opioidsafetyslo.org.