Position Statement: Drug Take-Back and Safe Disposal

As an innovative healthcare company, Boehringer Ingelheim supports the safe disposal of unused medications:

- Boehringer Ingelheim encourages patients to follow their health care provider’s instructions for taking prescription medicines. Patient adherence compliance with these instructions will minimize the presence of unused prescription medicines in the home and can improve patient outcomes.
- Boehringer Ingelheim supports safe and timely in-home disposal of unused or expired medications, as recommended by the FDA, DEA, and EPA, as a safe, effective, and convenient means to reduce the potential for misuse.
- For medications that are recalled, expired or otherwise no longer suitable for sale, we support the ability to use existing supply chain processes for managing commercial quantities.

Background:

Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., based in Ridgefield, CT, is the largest U.S. subsidiary of Boehringer Ingelheim Corporation. Boehringer Ingelheim is one of the world’s top 20 pharmaceutical companies. Headquartered in Ingelheim, Germany, the company operates globally with approximately 50,000 employees. Since its founding in 1885, the company has remained family-owned and today creates value through innovation for three business areas including human pharmaceuticals, animal health and biopharmaceutical contract manufacturing. Boehringer Ingelheim is committed to improving lives and providing valuable services and support to patients and their families.

There are many efforts and initiatives focused on the management and disposal of medications. States, counties, cities, regulatory agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are proposing inconsistent rules that result in significant financial and regulatory uncertainty.

Boehringer Ingelheim believes it is critical for Drug Take-Back programs to include engagement from law enforcement and other stakeholders across the drug supply chain. Programs should also be routinely evaluated to measure their success against intended outcomes.

Safe Disposal of Unused or Expired Medications

In situations where consumers have unused medicines in the home, Boehringer Ingelheim supports safe and timely disposal in the household trash for multiple reasons:

- In-home disposal allows consumers to promptly dispose of prescription medicines as soon as they know the medicine will not be used, thereby minimizing the risk that these items could be abused or otherwise diverted.
In-home disposal avoids the environmental impact and safety risks associated with shipping, and concentrating unwanted medicines at collection sites in take-back programs.

Patients should follow the FDA Guidelines for the disposal of medicines:

**Household trash disposal guidelines:**

1. Mix the drugs with something undesirable (coffee grounds, cat litter)
2. Put the mixture in a closeable container (plastic bag, empty can)
3. Throw the container away
4. Scratch out any identifying information on the medicine packaging and throw away

Never Flush Unwanted Medicines down the Drain

If you have any other questions about drug take-back or safe disposal, refer to the My Old Meds resource at [https://myoldmeds.com/](https://myoldmeds.com/)