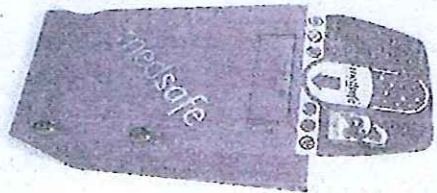


Red Rock Expands Drop Box Program



By Traci Chapman
Staff Writer

While heroin and methamphetamine many times top the lists of dangerous and addictive drugs, in Oklahoma opioids have now passed those substances to take the dubious title of most deadly drug - currently the most common cause of accidental drug overdose deaths in the state.

In fact, according to the 2016 Reducing

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Prescription Drug Abuse in Oklahoma Review and Plan, opioids killed more Oklahomans in 2014 than methamphetamine, heroin and cocaine combined.

Included in those deaths were many individuals who procured prescription drugs that weren't prescribed to them, officials said - and changing that fact is what those working at Red Rock Behavioral Health said they're committed to changing.

Red Rock works as a community liaison, working to help prevention efforts, both in Canadian County and beyond, SPF-PFS Coordinator Julia Cochran said. The agency's SPF-SIG project was funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

"Our grant focuses on the non-medical use of prescription drugs for ages 12-25, and we focus on safe storage, safe usage and safe disposal of prescription drugs," Cochran said. "The mission for this grant is to promote the appropriate use of prescription drugs by educating the community on the dangers of the non-medical use of prescription drugs and encouraging proper disposal, safe use and storage of prescription drugs."

One way to stem the use of non-prescribed opiates and other drugs getting into the wrong hands is to encourage those who have out-of-date or unneeded prescriptions to properly dispose of them, Cochran said. Successful networks of prescription drug boxes have sprung up across Oklahoma, including several in Canadian County; Red Rock recently accomplished another milestone in that effort - its first of four Grady County MedSafe drop-off boxes, located at Turtle's Cedar Springs Pharmacy. The box is available to the public during regular pharmacy hours - from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 9 a.m. until noon on Saturday.

"The box was just recently delivered," Cochran said. "One way to be a part of the opioid crisis in Oklahoma is disposing of prescription drugs properly - many people have prescriptions that are expired or unused and, because of the increase in prescription drug abuse, it is important to safely dispose of those medicines."

Unused and expired prescriptions and over-the-counter pills and capsules, items like ointments, lotions, powders and creams and 4-ounce or smaller liquid medicine bottles can be placed in the drop-offs, Cochran said. Liquids must be in original containers and sealed in a plastic bag. Items like aerosol sprays, alcohol or hydrogen peroxide, needles or syringes,

CANADIAN COUNTY DROP BOXES

Mustang Police Department
650 E. State Highway 152
405-376-2488

Yukon Police Department
100 S. Ranchwood Blvd.
405-354-1711

Canadian County Sheriff's Office
208 West Rodgers, El Reno
405-422-3187

Piedmont Police Department
400 Edmond Road NW
405-373-1334

mercury thermometers, batteries and chemicals are unacceptable for disposal, as are illegal drugs, she said.

Three Chickasha pharmacies - Chickasha Clinic, Grand Care and Liberty Drug - should have MedSafe boxes in the near future, Cochran said.

Chickasha Police Department and Grady County Jail also sponsor drug disposal boxes.

For more information about prescription drug abuse or other addiction issues in Oklahoma, go online to www.takesaprescribed.org or contact Cochran at 405-422-8872.

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