

# One dies every 19 minutes

Prescription drug abuse is growing at an alarming rate —  
and must be stopped.

Generation Rx - Case Study



It's true — every 19 minutes, one American dies from an unintentional drug overdose. And we aren't talking about illegal street drugs — we're talking about prescription drugs found right in your own medicine cabinet. The fact is, more Americans die from prescription drug abuse than cocaine, hallucinogens, inhalants and heroin combined .

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## Enter GenerationRx

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To address these alarming prescription drug abuse trends, The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy and the Cardinal Health Foundation teamed up to create the GenerationRx toolkits aimed at educating parents, teachers and teens about the realities and dangers of prescription drug abuse.

The first toolkit contains unique, interactive materials for healthcare professionals, pharmacists, parents and others to educate adults in community-based groups about the scope and consequences of prescription drug abuse. It also includes information about how to safely store and dispose of prescription medications, how to learn more about the prescription drug problem and steps to prevent it.

The second toolkit contains all the materials needed to deliver a highly interactive, 30-60 minute prescription drug abuse presentation geared toward teens. The user-friendly toolkit includes talking points, presentation materials, visual aids and thorough instructions to engage participants and utilizes games, skits and discussion prompts to engage participants and promote peer-to-peer prevention efforts.

**Both GenerationRx toolkits can be downloaded for free at [www.CardinalHealth.com/GenerationRx](http://www.CardinalHealth.com/GenerationRx).**

"The abuse and misuse of prescription drugs is second only to marijuana use as the nation's most prevalent drug problem. More than 6 million Americans age 12 and older have taken a prescription pain reliever, tranquilizer, sedative or stimulant for non-medical reasons in the past month, and nearly 7,000 people in the United States do so for the first time every day," said Dr. Ken Hale, R.Ph., Ph.D., Assistant Dean for Professional and External Affairs at The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy. "It's clear that more needs to be done to combat this growing societal issue. Through the GenerationRx toolkit and other community education efforts, we're proud to work in partnership with the Cardinal Health Foundation to help more Americans understand prescription medication abuse and how to prevent it."

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## Reversing the trend and measuring impact

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Even though unintentional prescription drug poisoning has emerged as the second leading cause of accidental death in 16 states and the District of Columbia, many teens still believe that prescription drugs are non-addictive and "safer" than illegal street drugs . With so many prescription drugs sitting unused and unsecured in the family medicine cabinet, young people have no problem gaining access to these drugs — and sharing them with their friends.

Since its inception in February 2010, thousands have participated in the GenerationRx programs with very positive results.

In partnership with The Ohio State University College of Social Work, a formal evaluation of the impact of the toolkit was developed, pilot tested and is being used in communities in target cities.

### Among adults participating in the programs:

**80.6%** reported they will properly dispose prescription drug medications.

**86.6%** reported being less likely to use prescription drugs that are not prescribed for them.

**88.7%** reported being less likely to share prescription drugs.

**65.3%** reported they are more likely to store prescription drugs in a secure location.

**58.7%** reported they will discuss the issue of prescription drug abuse with youth.

### Among youth participating in the programs:

**82.9%** reported they will properly dispose prescription drug medications.

**85.7%** reported being less likely to use prescription drugs that are not prescribed for them.

**90.3%** reported being less likely to share prescription drugs.

Dr. Nicole Cartwright Kwiek, clinical assistant professor and assistant director for Educational Outreach at The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy, says, "By engaging rather than lecturing, the [GenerationRx youth] program empowers teens to share accurate information about the realities of prescription drug abuse with their peers, enhancing prevention efforts and impeding the spread of dangerous myths."

## Scaling it up

At the request of Ohio Governor John Kasich's administration, Cardinal Health is engaged in a statewide partnership to create comprehensive, community-wide initiatives that include law enforcement, the courts, treatment, provider education, prevention and awareness.

## Expanding the program

GenerationRx is a crucial piece of this initiative in not only Ohio, but across the nation. Mini-grants are available to select communities to leverage the use of the toolkits and medication take-back and disposal days are being facilitated in conjunction with the DEA's nationwide initiative.

GenerationRx has reached almost all 50 states and engaged many people in the serious issue of prescription drug abuse with simple messages and calls to action.

Cardinal Health and The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy have also partnered with the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) to make the toolkits available to student pharmacists at 123 colleges and schools of pharmacy throughout the United States. Student pharmacists who are members of the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) are encouraged to use GenerationRx materials in presentations to local schools and to serve as advocates for prescription drug abuse prevention in their respective communities. Expansion of this work will include a focus on the misuse of prescription drugs by the elderly.

## Recognizing excellence

Cardinal Health has also partnered with the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) to recognize pharmacists who demonstrate excellence in community-based prescription drug abuse prevention and a national recognition from APhA. In 2012, up to 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico will participate in this award program to honor outstanding efforts within the pharmacy community to raise awareness of this serious public health problem.

Prescription drug abuse is such a large and multifaceted issue that it requires multiple partners to truly make an impact. Educational institutions bring expertise and student involvement. Healthcare professionals provide expertise and can help spread a message quickly. Government can enlist the support of the legal system, treatment, providers and the courts. The private sector brings financial and other resources and can leverage relationships to expand the scope and reach of a program. Public-private partnerships can produce significant results when each partner brings its unique assets to the table to address a pressing societal issue.

**Together, as partners, we can make a significant impact on eliminating prescription drug abuse in our communities. And Cardinal Health is helping to lead the fight.**

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Dr. Ken Hale, R.Ph., Ph.D.,  
Assistant Dean for Professional and External Affairs  
at The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy

**GenerationRx**  
Preventing the Misuse and Abuse of Prescription Medications

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Which types of prescription medications are most commonly abused?**  
The types of medications most commonly abused are prescription painkillers (Opioids), tranquilizers, sedatives, stimulants, and antidepressants (SSRIs).

**Why would the government approve these medications, and why would doctors prescribe them?**  
Prescription medications have many medical uses. Some are used to relieve pain, some to treat mental health conditions, and some to treat chronic diseases. They are prescribed when the benefits outweigh the risks.

**Why shouldn't I use someone else's prescription medication if I think I have the same condition?**  
Only a qualified health professional can accurately diagnose and prescribe the right medication for your condition. Using someone else's medication can be dangerous and may not work for you.

**What's wrong with using prescription stimulants to help me focus when working?**  
Using prescription stimulants to help you focus when working is not safe. These medications are designed to treat medical conditions, and using them without a prescription can lead to serious health problems.

**How do I know if I have a prescription drug problem?**  
If you are taking more medication than was prescribed, if you are taking medication from someone else, or if you are taking medication to feel better, you may have a prescription drug problem.

**Are there any signs that I have a prescription drug problem?**  
Signs of a prescription drug problem include: taking more medication than was prescribed, taking medication from someone else, taking medication to feel better, and experiencing withdrawal symptoms when you stop taking the medication.

**What are some signs that I have a prescription drug problem?**  
Signs of a prescription drug problem include: taking more medication than was prescribed, taking medication from someone else, taking medication to feel better, and experiencing withdrawal symptoms when you stop taking the medication.

**Getting started**

**Thank you for choosing to be a part of the GenerationRx Outreach Program.**

**Don't feel like you have to be the ultimate expert.**

**You can do this!**

**I can be more**

**I will:**

- Educate my patients and community on the dangers of prescription drug abuse.
- Host a medication disposal day in my community.
- Make a presentation to a rotary, PTA, faith-based organization or other community groups about this issue.

**GenerationRx**  
Preventing the Misuse and Abuse of Prescription Medications

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## About Cardinal Health

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At Cardinal Health, we provide hospitals with everyday solutions that go beyond the pharmacy. From shelf space to product flow, we offer proven methods to optimize the management of their inventory, ensuring they have what they need when and where they need it.

With decades of supply chain expertise, we devise custom plans that improve cash flow, reduce unnecessary costs and open new revenue opportunities, so healthcare providers have more time to focus on what matters most—their patients.

Since 2001, Cardinal Health and the Cardinal Health Foundation have contributed more than \$150 million in cash and product donations to hundreds of non-profit organizations both domestically and abroad, focusing on improving healthcare and positively impacting hundreds of thousands of lives worldwide.

Together with our employees, we provide funding and volunteer resources to help innovative non-profit organizations directly improve the lives of those in their communities who need it most.

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### Like to know more?

For more information about Cardinal Health go to [www.cardinalhealth.com/community](http://www.cardinalhealth.com/community).

