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MDCH Launches Website to Address Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) has developed a website to increase public awareness of the risks and potential harm associated with misuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs, and to provide everyday steps individuals can take to address the issue in their families and communities. *Do Your Part: Be the Solution* is a multifaceted approach to addressing prescription drug misuse and abuse across Michigan.

“Everyone has a role to play in the solution as we address prescription drug misuse and abuse in Michigan. This website offers practical steps that everyone can take right now,” said Lyon. “We can all do our part by monitoring the medications in our homes, understanding the risks of sharing prescription medications, and properly disposing of medications when they are no longer needed.”

The non-medical use or abuse of prescription drugs is the fastest growing drug problem in the United States, and prescription medication is the second most commonly abused category of drugs. Opiate overdoses, once almost always due to heroin use, are now increasingly due to the abuse of prescription painkillers. In 2012, 941 Michigan residents died due to unintentional drug poisoning.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, every day an average of 2,000 teenagers nationwide use a prescription drug for the first time without a doctor’s guidance. Oftentimes, teens are accessing these drugs in their own homes. It can be as easy as opening a cupboard, drawer or medicine cabinet.

In addition, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) sites prescription opioid abuse may be “the first step” to heroin use. Recent research by NIDA indicated that almost half of the young heroin users who injected heroin reported they used opioid pain relievers before the started using heroin.

Do Your Part: Be the Solution addresses the issue of prescription drug misuse and abuse using a multi-pronged approach including educating communities and the general public, providing guidance and resources to the medical community and other professionals, and linking to information on proper disposal to reduce the impact on the environment.

For more information on the *Do Your Part: Be the Solution* campaign visit the website at www.michigan.gov/doyourpart.

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