

## **Anti-Drug Coalition Distributes At-Home Deactivation Bags**

Through a state grant secured earlier this year by the Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition, more than 9,000 households in Tuscarawas County will be able to safely dispose of unused medications by placing them in a specially designed deactivation bag – and then simply dropping them in their trash.

Distribution of the drug deactivation bags began today (Dec. 13, 2017) when members of the Anti-Drug Coalition hosted a breakfast for a wide range of county agencies and organizations who will assist in getting the bags to households.

“We’ve reached out to a number of agencies and officials who come in contact with our residents who can use these bags to help get unused medications out of circulation,” said Jodi Salvo of Personal & Family Counseling Services and the Anti-Drug Coalition. “With the drop-off locations that are available throughout Tuscarawas County for safe disposal, this in-home deactivation should remove even more potentially dangerous medications and prescriptions from potential abuse.”

Representatives from area hospitals, nursing homes, physician offices, pharmacies, health departments, home health care agencies, ambulance services, funeral homes, libraries, local businesses and more met today (Dec. 13, 2017) in the Tuscarawas County Senior Center at Dover to hear more about the deactivation bags and receive supplies for distribution.

A total of 9,100 of the “Deterra Drug Deactivation System” bags were purchased by the Anti-Drug Coalition after it received a grant from the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services. The lightweight bags measure 10 inches long by 5 inches wide and can hold up to 45 pills, 6 ounces of liquid or 6 patches at one time. Users simply place unused medications in the bag’s pouch, fill halfway with warm tap water, seal tightly, shake and throw in the trash.

Bags distributed by the Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition also are affixed with an educational flier and a postage-paid survey card to gather anonymous information to assist in future projects, Salvo said.

“The information that we receive back from the users of the deactivation bags will be completely anonymous since we are not asking for any identifying information,” Salvo said. “But the information they provide to us will help us with projects to help end prescription misuse and abuse.”

Several partners also are assisting with the project. They are:

- Healthy Tusc – sponsor of the distribution breakfast program
- Buckeye Career Center – design and printing of survey cards
- Union Hospital – postage-paid services for surveys
- United Way of Tuscarawas County- paid for printing costs of drop-box disposal flyers
- Dover-New Philadelphia Kiwanis Club – donation for production of survey cards
- RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) – preparation of bags for distribution
- Tuscarawas County Sheriff’s Office – support for production of instruction cards
- Personal & Family Counseling Services – project coordination
- Medi-Wise Pharmacy – project coordination assistance

- Stark-Tuscarawas-Wayne Joint Solid Waste Management District – support for education fliers

Details about the Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition can be found on its website at <http://adc-tusc.com/> and on the Coalition's page on Facebook.

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