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Michigan Pharmacists Association’s 2019 Disposal Event Brings in
Nearly One Ton of Medication
Press conference highlights the importance of collaboration to combat the opioid epidemic and the value pharmacists bring in protecting the health
and wellness of Michigan residents

Lansing, Mich. - At the tenth annual Medication Disposal Event, held Sept. 17, 2019, at the Michigan State Capitol, 420 pounds of medications were dropped off by Lansing area residents for safe disposal. Of those 420 pounds, 26 pounds were controlled substances. Over the last ten years since Michigan Pharmacists Association (MPA) began holding the disposal event, nearly four tons of pharmaceuticals have been collected and properly disposed of. Providing this safe means for disposing of medications has removed unnecessary and harmful drugs from households where they have the potential to be diverted or misused.

According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, in 2017 alone there were 2,686 drug overdose deaths in Michigan. Of those overdose deaths 2,053 involved opioids. Throughout the U.S. in 2017, enough opioid prescriptions were dispensed for nearly half the population to have one. This event provides a safe forum for disposing of unwanted medications, including opioids and other controlled substances, in an effort to get them out of the medicine cabinet and off the streets. This event provides a safe forum for disposing of unwanted medications, including opioids and other controlled substances, in an effort to get them out of the medicine cabinet and off the streets. Pharmacists can provide education and counseling to patients prescribed opioids, and when working collaboratively with other providers, pharmacists can positively affect the rising rates of drug abuse and diversion.

The Medication Disposal Event is held in conjunction with Pharmacy Day at the Capitol, an event designed to educate Michigan’s lawmakers and the public on the vital role pharmacists play in healthcare. Lawmakers received health screenings as well as influenza and pneumonia immunizations administered by pharmacists. The general public, State Representatives and Senators, and government employees who brought their unused, unwanted or expired medications to be disposed learned about proper medication disposal methods and the vital role that pharmacists play in keeping patients and communities safe.

Michigan Pharmacists Association, representing the nearly 9,000 pharmacists and 15,000 pharmacy technicians in Michigan, strives to serve members by providing support, advocacy and resources that ultimately improve patient care, safety, health and the practice of pharmacy. For more information, visit www.MichiganPharmacists.org.

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