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FEATURED

Bassett, O'Connor to accept leftover Rx drugs

By Erin Jerome Staff Writer Feb 8, 2018 Updated 2 hrs ago



ContributedA medication disposal kiosk is pictured at Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown near the outpatient pharmacy.

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Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown and O'Connor Hospital in Delhi are among five rural hospitals in the state that have begun collecting leftover pharmaceuticals from the public as part of a pilot program.

The hospitals will collect old drugs free of charge until July 2018 as part of a program developed by

the Product Stewardship Institute and the New York Product Stewardship Council, and funded by the federal Department of Agriculture. FoxCare Pharmacy in Oneonta will also be collecting unused medications.

Kiosks are located at BMC in the clinic lobby near the outpatient pharmacy, and in the outpatient pharmacy waiting areas at O'Connor and FoxCare.

Prescription opioid overdoses kill more Americans than cocaine and heroin combined, and statistics show that seven out of 10 prescription pain relief abusers get their drugs from family and friends, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Many then turn to illegal narcotics when those supplies run dry.

The federal effort bolsters other local responses to curb drug abuse and the environmental impact of unused drugs through take-back programs. There are also two national collections days organized by the Drug Enforcement Administration each year, in April and October.

Sheriff's offices in Otsego, Delaware, Chenango and Schoharie counties have drug take-back boxes, and many police departments across those counties do as well.

In Chenango County, a Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition has seen rates of hepatitis C, an infection linked to heroin and intravenous drug use, plateau since organizing monthly take-back events.

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Erin Jerome