

# DESIGNATED MEDICATION MANAGER CAMPAIGN (DMM)

We can all help stop medication errors and medication abuse. Join the fight to reduce medication misuse.

## THE PROBLEM

An estimated 1.5 million people are injured by medication errors in the United States each year. It is said that about 22.5 million Americans use illicit drugs. A medication taken by a person for whom it was not prescribed, or in dosages other than prescribed, can have serious adverse effects on health. Causes of medication error and abuse include (but aren't limited to) surgery-related depression, mental confusion, and the use of prescription painkillers. But medication errors can be greatly reduced and the best person to help a patient do that is a trusted relative or friend of the patient.

## PREVENTION

Medication errors and abuse can be minimized before a prescription is filled: by designating a Medication Manager or intervention support person (often a close family member or friend) to help getting materials to educate the patient in correct use of the medication.

While any medications are being taken: by providing a support person and monitoring system for the patient.

At any time: by helping patients eliminate the risk of medication overuse or misuse.

## THE DMM CAMPAIGN

The Designated Medication Manager (DMM) campaign was developed to assist individuals taking any medication. A DMM, assigned by the patient before medication use begins, helps patients with prescription drug, over the counter drug or vitamin and herbal intake and watches out for mistakes, misuse, and signs of addiction. The campaign encourages the recruitment of DMMs and suggests programs and literature to assist them in the skills they will need.

References: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, 2012/ <http://www.samhsa.gov/>; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2012. / <http://www.drugabuse.gov/>; Long Island Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence, 2012 / <http://www.licadd.com/>

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## Community and Family

### **To be a Designated Medication Manager (DMM), offer to:**

Help a friend dispose of unused or unneeded medications.

Ask a friend if he or she would like you to help them look for any expired medications.

Go to the doctor or pharmacist with a friend or family member to be sure they understand the instructions for their medications.

Be available when a friend or family member is discharged from the hospital, to be sure they understand their medications and discharge instructions.

Research any medication side effects or adverse events that may occur.

Help update the patient's medication list and include any side effects or unplanned outcomes during use of medication.

Check that labels are still attached and intact on medication packaging.

Ask the patient if you can check back with them a day or so after getting a new prescription, to see if there are any side effects or complications.

Ask to bring all the patient's medications, vitamins, or herbs to the pharmacists, doctor or nurse for review, and then make an appointment.

Check to see if the patient is using only one pharmacy for all prescriptions.

Keep all information private and confidential and ensure patient gets the privacy they want and need.

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## Clinician and / or Pharmacist

### **To be a clinician or pharmacist supporting the Designated Medication Manager (DMM) here are some things you could do:**

Ask the patient who their Designated Medication Manager is, to assist them with their medications when they get home.

If the patient has no Designated Medication Manager, encourage him or her to designate a helper to be an extra set of eyes and ears when dealing with medication.

Suggest that the Designated Medication Manager helps make sure medications are used as prescribed, since there are so many opportunities for error, or in some cases for overuse of medications.

Ask the patient to bring the Designated Medication Manager along to the doctor's office, the hospital (especially at discharge) or to the pharmacy to help ask questions.

List on the patient's record who their Designated Medication Manager is or could be.

Post signs and literature encouraging patients to choose a Designated Medication Manager.

#### Facts:

Medication Errors Injure 1.5 Million People and Cost Billions of Dollars Annually. *Institute of Medicine 2006*

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, a crucial first step in tackling the problem of prescription drug abuse is to educate patients about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs.

A Yale-New Haven Hospital study reports that 377 patients who went to the hospital with heart failure, acute coronary syndrome or pneumonia, (81%) encountered medication issues after discharge.

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