



MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

Every physician matters, each patient counts.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
S.1042, AND ACT RELATIVE TO RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP BY DRUG
MANUFACTURERS
BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
JUNE 8, 2015**

The Massachusetts Medical Society wishes to be recorded in support of Senator Keenan's bill, S.1042, *An Act Relative to Responsible Stewardship by Drug Manufacturers*.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only 20% of nonmedical opioid users report that they acquired the drug from their own doctor. This affirms Medical Society's belief that there needs to be a reduction in the number of unused prescription drugs in medicine cabinets across the state. Proper storage and disposal needs to be a top priority in fighting the opioid epidemic. Senate bill 1042 is an important step in facilitating the safe disposal of prescription drugs.

While there is little argument about the importance of promoting safe disposal of prescription drugs, the execution has been difficult. As you know, certain police stations currently allow for drug drop-offs. Unfortunately, they are not always convenient or welcome areas for all persons in a given population. Self-disposal can also be an important option, but patients often receive conflicting information about the best means by which to do this, and self-disposal may not be the best option in all circumstances.

The pharmaceutical industry presents a logical partner to help facilitate broader drug disposal programs. Such legislation could provide complimentary programs to current police station drop offs, such as mail order, drop off day events, and additional drop off locations in more welcoming or convenient locations.

The Medical Society is pleased to report that—in the same spirit as this bill—we've recently launched a public awareness campaign focused on safe drug storage and disposal. We have signed a strategic partnership with the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids which provides materials on these topics to promote public awareness in these key areas. This initiative, called SmartScripts MA, will utilize social media as well as traditional print handouts for physician offices to educate patients and physicians about how to best to store and dispose prescription drugs to ultimately prevent diversion of drugs.

The opioid epidemic is complex and multi-factorial; the response in turn needs to be broad based and comprehensive. Prevention, intervention, and access to treatment are critical areas of concern that we hope will receive due consideration in the legislature. Safe storage and disposal is an equally important, though often overlooked, piece of the fight to help turn around this public health crisis. Senate bill 1042 is a thoughtful, actionable step to help reduce the number of prescription drugs available for diversion for misuse. The Medical Society is pleased to offer support of this bill.