

# Your support will make Project Rx successful

**F**or a fourth consecutive year, community members and numerous volunteers are coming together once again to help dispose of expired and unused medications. This fall, Project Rx will take place on Saturday, Sept. 27, at three Greenville drive-thru locations. As a primary care physician and a member of the Greenville County Medical Society (GCMS), I am proud to support this community initiative and excited to join other physicians, pharmacists and volunteers in their efforts to protect our community and our local environment from the dangers of improper handling and disposal of medications.

When physicians write prescriptions for our patients, we want them to know five things:

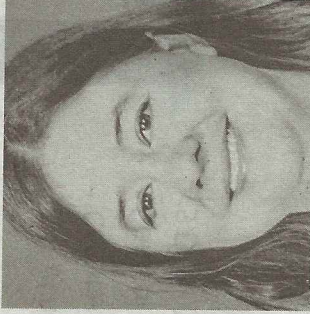
- » What they are being prescribed.
- » Why the medication is prescribed.
- » How to properly take the medication.
- » The medication is for the individual prescribed, not to be shared.
- » Proper disposal of unused or expired medication.

A big concern to all physicians is the sharing of prescription medications between family members and friends. According to a recent poll by Reuters, one in 10 Americans reported that they have taken a prescription drug that was not prescribed for them. The majority of people said they turned to medications prescribed to another individual to relieve common health issues, such as pain, sleep troubles, stress and anxiety.

The dosing and selection of medications by a physician is based on the weight and age of a patient, the presence of allergies, existing conditions and potential interactions with other medications that the patient is taking. All of these factors vary greatly from one person to another. Even if two individuals have the same diagnosis, the best treatment for each patient may vary.

Appropriate treatment for one patient may be inappropriate treatment for another. Using another individual's medications could lead to inappropriate dosing, toxic drug interactions, avoidable side

## GUEST COLUMN



Dr. Stefanie M. Putnam is with GHS Heritage Pediatrics and Internal Medicine – Simpsonville, and she is a member of the Greenville County Medical Society. Dr. Putnam may be reached at [sputnam@ghs.org](mailto:sputnam@ghs.org).

effects and treatment with the wrong medication. Taking a medication that has been prescribed for someone else is a form of drug abuse that can be easily avoided by following physician recommendations and by taking steps to dispose of leftover medications safely. Project Rx provides proper

disposal of medications through a well-organized team of volunteers that include physicians, pharmacists, nurses, other healthcare professionals and numerous dedicated community volunteers. Together we sort, dispose, recycle ... but only after you have made the choice to dispose of medication properly and stop by one of the Project Rx locations. Project Rx is an example of how collaboration can produce winning-results for our community. With 17 partner and supporting organizations, Project Rx has collected 9,967 pounds of medication to date and protects the safety of our community and waterways.

GCMS has been a proud partner of Project Rx since the inaugural event in November 2010. In the fall of 2011, GCMS decided to go a little further with our support and host a location because our physicians believe in the purpose of this project and their patients. The GCMS physicians volunteer their time, encourage their spouses and staff members to participate and become part of the team and communi-

ty spirit. Project Rx at GCMS is a simple way my fellow physicians support their community and encourage choices for healthy and safe living.

Project Rx is beneficial to our community as it helps protect our residents and rivers. The hundreds of pounds of medications are collected and incinerated with the assistance of the Greenville County Sheriff's Office and the DEA. The recycling of paper and plastic material is another way that Project Rx protects our local environment.

I urge you to take a few minutes to check your medicine cabinet, prescription basket or wherever you and your family may store prescription medications and to look for expired or unused drugs. Your support of Project Rx is the reason we have been so successful.

We hope to see you at one of our convenient locations: Greenville Technical College McAlister Square, St. Francis Millennium Campus and Greenville County Medical Society. For more information, visit [www.ariverrremedy.org](http://www.ariverrremedy.org).

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