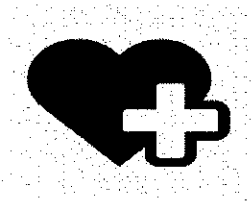


## Health Ministry Topic for March /April 2018

### Safe Disposal of Medications/Needles



Safe disposal of unwanted or expired prescriptions/ over the counter medications is EVERYONE'S responsibility. It is important to dispose of these medications safely to help reduce harm from accidental exposure, intentional misuse which includes the opioid epidemic. This also includes the safe disposal of needles/sharps used in the administration of certain medications. How do you dispose of your unwanted medications/sharps?

As you know, misuse of drugs is nationwide as well as in our own community. Studies have indicated that the majority of abused medications were obtained from family medicine cabinets by visitors, family members, including children and teens. Properly disposing of these medications/needles in a timely manner generally reduces the risk of abuse by others. It is important to dispose of needles/sharps properly as well because they can cause injury to people through accidental needle sticks which spreads infections such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV.

The environment is also adversely affected by improper medication disposal. When medications of any type are flushed down the toilet, the environment is contaminated because waste water treatment plants/septic systems are not designed to deal with the chemicals in medications. Medications can pass through these systems and are released into the water adversely affecting fish and wildlife. Needles/sharps can also pose a risk to the environment as they too may contaminate the surrounding area.

Did you know that disposing of your unused, expired medications and NOW syringes/needles can be easily and conveniently accomplished here in the Village of Crete? The CUMC Health Ministry approached the Crete Chief of Police, James M. Paoletti and the Deputy Chief of Police, Scott Pieritz about adding a much needed receptacle for the safe disposal of needles/sharps. We are very appreciative of their positive response, support, and implementation in providing this important and much needed community resource.

There are two receptacles located in the lobby at the Benton Street entrance of the Crete Police Department. The first and largest drop box is for medications in non- liquid form. These medications must also be in a container or prescription bottle with identifying information removed. NO LOOSE OR INJECTABLE drugs are to be placed in this drop box. The second smaller drop box which is attached to the side of the larger drop box is specific for the disposal of only syringe needles/sharps. Please try to replace the cap on the end of the needle before placing it in this box. Drop the syringe/needle inside the container and press the plastic knob on right side of the box to complete dropping syringes into the holding container. DO NOT try to place your hand inside the syringe drop box. The Crete Police Department is located at 1370 Benton Street. The non-emergency phone number is 708-672-0911. Drop off hours for medications/syringes are ONLY MONDAY-FRIDAY 8am to 4 pm.

PLEASE: DO NOT FLUSH OR TOSS ANY MEDICATIONS OR NEEDLES!

DO YOUR PART IN MAKING OUR COMMUNITY SAFER BY USING THESE FREE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CRETE POLICE DEPARTMENT.