

2016 ANNUAL REPORT SUPPLEMENT

2.2 Education and Public Outreach

2.2.1 Description of 2016 Education and Public Outreach

MED-Project conducted 23 take-back events, performed installations at ten (10) kiosk drop-off sites, and distributed materials, including brochures and posters, to each site in 2016. Collection at the kiosk drop-off sites did not begin until 2017. The toll-free number for the call center continues to be available in both English and Spanish for County residents. The MED-Project call center returns voicemails within one business day as provided in the approved Plan.

In an effort to increase website visits, MED-Project continued outreach in 2016 through social media websites such as Twitter and Facebook. Brochures and materials were distributed to nearby pharmacies, law enforcement agencies, clinics, veterinary facilities, hospitals, and community groups, and other media outlets were contacted to increase outreach prior to events. Website statistics for 2016 can be viewed in Table 3 and show measurable increases over 2015, which had approximately 250 visits for the calendar year.

WEB PAGE NAME	WEB PAGE URL	VISITS
Take-Back Events	http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/events	836
Home Page	http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda	750
Convenient Kiosks	http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/kiosks	263
MEDinfo	http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/info	178
MEDfaq	http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/faqs	107
Check The Package	http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/package	97
Contact	http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/contact	75

Table 3: Number of Unique Web Page Visits During 2016

The MED-Project website (<http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda>) has been live for nearly two years, and is regularly updated to ensure alignment with the revised Ordinance and approved Plan. The website now provides contact information County residents, Collection Site Hosts, and producers can use to obtain Program information.

Information regarding kiosk drop-off sites is available in both map and list format at <http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/kiosks>. And take-back events are listed at the following site: <http://www.med-project.org/locations/alameda/events>.

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2.2.2 Feedback on 2016 Education and Public Outreach and Future Plans

The Plan's medium-term education and public outreach goals provide that MED-Project may revise and/or add communication materials based on changes to the Plan, and that MED-Project will review media and public outreach and collect feedback to improve operations. The methodology employed by MED-Project utilizes qualitative and quantitative techniques to evaluate the outreach and Program activities, including unstructured interviews, data collection at take-back events, and website statistics. MED-Project is also incorporating information collected, best practices, and lessons learned from other jurisdictions to improve its Program.

MED-Project performed unstructured interviews of residents, potential and existing collection site hosts, stakeholders, health systems, and local agencies in various settings. The purpose of these interviews was to elicit feedback regarding program awareness and activities. Information was gathered during take-back events, site visits, and regularly scheduled meetings.

Data collection was performed during and after take-back events to capture attendance, collection, transport, and Unwanted Medicine disposal statistics. Website statistics were compared to the previous calendar year.

Through its data collection, MED-Project learned that events held in combination with the County's HHW events showed increased consumer participation as compared to events hosted at fairs or festivals. While MED-Project advertised its events extensively on social media and the MED-Project website, consumer participation at events was highest where event hosts provided additional advertising and marketing. Events promoted by MED-Project alone collected fewer than 50 pounds of Unwanted Medicine per event on average, while events that were promoted jointly with host sites collected more than 100 pounds of Unwanted Medicine per event on average.

While MED-Project promotions through Facebook and Twitter were effective in increasing visits to the MED-Project website for general information, promotion through Nextdoor is showing increased participation at take-back events in other Bay Area jurisdictions in 2017.

As a result of these lessons learned, MED-Project may be able to improve collections at 2017 events by increasing collaboration and combined marketing efforts with host sites, utilizing appropriate social media outlets, and conducting events in conjunction with HHW events.

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MED-Project is now providing media release templates to host sites, which will enable sites to promote events in combination with MED-Project's efforts. MED-Project is also working in collaboration with Alameda County DEH to conduct Unwanted Medicine take-back events at all HHW events in 2017.

In addition, consumer participation at events in other Bay Area jurisdictions has been increasing steadily as a result of MED-Project's advertising on more targeted social media platforms, such as Nextdoor. MED-Project intends to apply the same innovations in Alameda County, which are likely to increase consumer participation at take-back events.

Regarding kiosk drop-off sites, MED-Project will continue to publicize these locations in 2017, and will provide each site with posters, brochures, and template media releases. All existing and new kiosk drop-off sites are promoted on social media and the MED-Project website upon activation. Fliers for residents will also be produced to increase public awareness.

Efforts to recruit additional health systems in 2017 may also increase awareness, with systems such as Kaiser Permanente offering to work more closely with MED-Project to implement numerous kiosk drop-off sites throughout multiple jurisdictions.

MED-Project started a campaign in 2017 to increase awareness of its programs in Alameda County and to recruit additional collection sites by performing site visits and distributing outreach materials to over 50 potential collection sites. MED-Project is also distributing materials to health associations, systems, and organizations, as described in Appendix E of its approved Plan.

In February 2016, Alameda County DEH informed MED-Project of complaints related to the call center and website. Alameda County DEH relayed several issues identified with the call center, including long wait times, routing to incorrect operator attendants, and off business hours messages while calling during business hours. Website users also reported difficulty in downloading materials. Call center issues were corrected promptly, and dedicated operators were assigned to MED-Project to ensure proper routing for callers. MED-Project also added information to the website enabling users to request materials by email, if they are unable to download them.

Pursuant to the Plan and in response to Alameda County DEH feedback, MED-Project is exploring additional opportunities to perform outreach and education through public radio, television and/or print media. Utilization of these media platforms will begin in May 2017, followed by an assessment of effectiveness beginning in August 2017.

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2.2.3 Conclusion: 2016 Education and Public Outreach

MED-Project's outreach efforts in 2016 demonstrated increased public awareness of take-back events and the MED-Project Program in general. As part of its outreach and education strategy, MED-Project intends to conduct more formal interviews and surveys in 2017 in order to improve the Program. In 2017, MED-Project will also continue outreach efforts to publicize take-back events and kiosk drop-off sites as described above. MED-Project continues to review its outreach effectiveness, and revise its processes, systems, and agreements to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Program.