

May 1, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to formally invite you to be an integral part of the premiere national conference on prescription drug use, abuse, return, and disposal.

We are **announcing the Call for Proposals to present at the 2008 International Symposium on Pharmaceuticals in the Home and Environment: *Catalysts for Change***. This conference represents the official venue for the Sixth Annual Maine Benzodiazepine Study Group Conference and the Fifth Annual Unused Drug Return Conference, taking place on November 10 & 11, 2008 in South Portland, Maine. This conference is designed for health care professionals, policy makers, law enforcement personnel, environmentalists, substance abuse professionals, and others concerned with the human and environmental impact of benzodiazepines and other prescription drugs on individuals, families, and communities.

This year's conference will be the gathering place for disseminating the latest trend data available on prescription drug use and abuse. It will also showcase the rapidly expanding number of innovative demonstrations throughout the United States and beyond that promote responsible, effective, efficient, and safe prescribing, usage, return and disposal practices.

The conference theme - *Catalysts for Change* - serves to emphasize the importance of a broad range of prescription drug stakeholders coming together in partnership to think creatively and constructively about ways in which to address the significant issues associated with the use, abuse, return and disposal of prescription drugs. The theme is premised on the ultimate concern of all groups affected by prescription drugs in promoting the health and well-being of patients through the appropriate use and handling of prescription drugs. The theme further emphasizes the importance of action strategies being undertaken locally, nationally, and internationally which are innovative and bold, holding promise as evidence-based approaches for improving the quality of life and safety of individuals, families, and communities. Submissions are encouraged to address this year's conference theme of "*Catalysts for Change*."

At this time, we are accepting proposals to be considered for presentation at the symposium. Possible topics may include but are not limited to: trends in prescription use or abuse, program strategies for successful drug disposal projects, best practices in prescribing medication, legislation and policies effecting prescription drug use and disposal, results of prescription drug return projects, and alternative therapies to benzodiazepines.

If you would like to participate in this exciting event, please submit a 1-page proposal of your presentation to Jason Charland by June 30, 2008 (electronic submissions only please: [jason.charland@umit.maine.edu](mailto:jason.charland@umit.maine.edu)). Please include the following information:

- The title and a one paragraph description of your presentation
- Your name, degree(s), title, and organizational affiliation
- The preferred length for your presentation.
- Learning objectives of the presentation

Each individual or organization may submit more than one proposal. Applicants will be notified of a decision by July 31, 2008. (Please note that the submission of a proposal cannot guarantee its acceptance for presentation.). Presenters are responsible for all expenses associated with participation at the 2008 International Symposium.

I encourage you to forward this "Call for Proposals" to your colleagues. For more information and an announcement suitable for posting, please visit [www.mainebenzo.org/2008conference.htm](http://www.mainebenzo.org/2008conference.htm) Please contact our conference coordinator, Jason Charland at [jason.charland@umit.maine.edu](mailto:jason.charland@umit.maine.edu) with any questions.