

Product Stewardship Institute (PSI)

Program Overview: The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national non-profit membership-based organization located in Boston, Massachusetts. PSI works with state and local government agencies to partner with manufacturers, retailers, environmental groups, federal agencies, and other key stakeholders to reduce the health and environmental impacts of consumer products. PSI takes a unique product stewardship approach to solving waste management problems by encouraging product design changes and mediating stakeholder dialogues¹.

In Spring 2005, five local government agencies provided initial funding for PSI to conduct the first phase of a potential national dialogue on unwanted/waste pharmaceuticals. PSI is in the process of interviewing key stakeholders for inclusion in its Product Stewardship Action Plan. This action plan was focused on unwanted/waste pharmaceuticals from households and long-term care facilities (nursing homes, hospice care, etc.), rather than on personal care products or non-pharmaceutical endocrine disruptors. Its main goal is to develop a nationally coordinated system for the management of unwanted pharmaceuticals that allows for multiple solutions to reflect regional differences.

From the PSI website:

“Over the past two years, PSI has received funding from multiple state and local agencies to develop product stewardship approaches for the end of life management of unwanted/waste pharmaceuticals. The primary goals of this project include evaluating the need for a nationally coordinated system for the management of unwanted/waste pharmaceuticals that allows for multiple solutions to reflect local/regional differences, and increasing the safe, legal, and environmentally protective collection and/or disposal of unwanted/waste pharmaceuticals through the development of best management practices. PSI drafted a Project Summary as a tool to develop consensus among diverse stakeholders and used this document as the foundation for a Pharmaceuticals Product Stewardship Action Plan which incorporates multiple key stakeholder interviews and other research. The main goals of the PSI multi-stakeholder dialogue are to increase awareness and to create a national, sustainable system for the end of life management of waste/unwanted pharmaceuticals. “

Key Motivation: PSI cites several reasons for their initiatives addressing the proper management of unused pharmaceuticals that typically enter the municipal solid waste stream, municipal wastewater, or residential septic systems. These include:

- Pharmaceuticals are ubiquitous in our lives;
- Ongoing studies reveal that pharmaceuticals are entering the environment;
- Some classes of pharmaceuticals can act as endocrine disrupters, which have been linked to abnormalities and impaired reproductive performance in some species;
- Currently, a national collection program for unwanted pharmaceuticals is inhibited by various regulations.

¹ <http://www.productstewardship.us/>

Organizing Body: The Product Stewardship Action Plan, which was overseen by the PSI, involved the following parties:

- Pharmaceutical companies/associations that focus on:
 - Research & Development
 - Generic Drug Manufacturing
- Government (city, county, state, and federal); PSI received considerable assistance and funding from the local government agencies of King County, WA, Santa Monica, CA, and San Francisco, CA.
- Pharmacies
- Reverse Distributors
- WWTP and Water Treatment Associations (San Benito County Integrated Waste Management Agency (CA) and the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management Agency)

Level of Implementation: The PSI project will provide a national umbrella for local pilots such as those conducted by NERC and the Washington Department of Ecology. By doing so, PSI will help move toward a coordinated, comprehensive solution. By coordinating efforts and sharing results, PSI will save time and money for all those working on managing pharmaceutical wastes.

PSI has 4 working groups:

- Source Reduction Workgroup
- Joint Research Workgroup
- Regulations Workgroup
- Collection and Disposal Workgroup

Outcome: PSI's project is comprised of three phases.

Phase I:

- Conduct literature search
- Identify and summarize existing efforts
- Identify and interview key stakeholders; invite participation in national dialogue
- Develop *Product Stewardship Action Plan for Unwanted/Waste Pharmaceuticals*
- Post *Action Plan* and project materials on PSI website

Phase II:

- Convene four national dialogue meetings with key stakeholders
- Convene workgroups between meetings
- Develop priority agreements with key stakeholders
- Promote and disseminate project results through multiple venues

Phase III:

- Jointly implement priority projects and initiatives

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