



Meeting: Lethal Means Safety Subcommittee

Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2024 1 pm – 2:15 p.m.

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Meeting ID: 842 6306 5478 Phone:+16699006833,,84263065478# US (San Jose)

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Committee Members: Co-Chair Kellie McWilliams, Co-Chair Pam Pearce, Alyssa Callender, Casey Curry, Daniell Zeigler, Debra Darmata, Galli Murray, Megan Miller, Meghan Crane, Mike James, Shanda Hochstetler, Steven Schneider, Gordon Clay,

Staff: Annette Marcus (AOCMHP)

Time	Topic/Who	Notes
9:00	Welcome	
9:05	Review Updated Initiatives and Notes from Special Meeting	Initiatives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop recommendations for safe storage programs for firearms, medications, and mind-altering substances using summarized and citation-specific evidence to be shared with state and county-level elected officials; developing suggested messaging and educational programming for explaining to children what the dangers are and develop safety planning 2. Identify needs and resources in culturally specific communities, service members and veterans, young people of color and rural white women, around safe storage, suicide prevention and access to lethal means.
9:30	Begin to develop workplan and timeline to achieve initiatives (See notes from special meeting below the agenda)	

10:15	Adjourn	
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For Discussion at Future Meetings As We Implement New Initiatives:

Addressing safe storage, suicide prevention, and access to lethal means in culturally specific communities, service members and veterans, young people of color, and rural white women requires a tailored approach. Below are the identified **needs** and **resources** for these groups, considering their unique challenges and strengths.

1. Culturally Specific Communities

Needs:

- **Culturally Relevant Messaging:** Safe storage and suicide prevention initiatives must incorporate culturally resonant language, traditions, and values.
- **Access to Trusted Community Leaders:** Outreach should involve faith leaders, elders, or community advocates who hold influence.
- **Addressing Stigma:** Mental health discussions and seeking support are often stigmatized; programs need to normalize conversations about mental health and firearm safety.

Resources:

- **Oregon Coalition of Communities of Color:** Provides advocacy, data, and resources for culturally specific communities.
 - **Community Health Workers:** Can serve as liaisons to educate families on safe storage and suicide prevention in culturally appropriate ways.
 - **Multilingual Materials:** Develop resources in multiple languages to ensure accessibility.
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2. Service Members and Veterans

Needs:

- **Veteran-Specific Support Networks:** Service members and veterans often distrust traditional health systems, requiring veteran-led programs.
- **Gun Culture Sensitivity:** Many veterans value firearm ownership; programs should focus on responsible storage rather than restriction.
- **Crisis Intervention Accessibility:** Rapid-response services tailored to veterans' needs during mental health crises.

Resources:

- **Veterans Crisis Line:** Offers confidential support and intervention resources 24/7.
 - **Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA):** Provides access to mental health programs and peer support groups.
 - **Project Safe Lock:** A program that provides free gun locks to veterans to promote safe storage practices.
 - **VA Safe Firearm Storage Toolkit:** A comprehensive guide to engaging veterans in firearm safety.
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3. Young People of Color

Needs:

- **Community-Based Programs:** Engage youth in mentorship and peer-led initiatives that address mental health, firearm safety, and coping strategies.
- **Access to Therapy:** Trauma-informed and culturally competent mental health services are essential.
- **Education on Risk Reduction:** Early intervention and education about the risks of firearms in homes.

Resources:

- **Youth Empowerment Programs:** Groups like REAP Inc. in Oregon support young people of color through mentorship and empowerment.
 - **School-Based Initiatives:** Programs that provide mental health resources and training for educators on suicide prevention.
 - **Black Mental Health Oregon:** A directory of culturally competent therapists and support services.
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4. Rural White Women

Needs:

- **Stigma Reduction in Mental Health:** Rural communities often face barriers to discussing mental health openly.
- **Firearm Safety Education:** Many rural women own firearms for protection or hunting, emphasizing safe storage without threatening ownership rights is key.
- **Improved Access to Services:** Distance from healthcare facilities necessitates telehealth and local outreach programs.

Resources:

- **Lines for Life Rural Outreach Programs:** Focused on suicide prevention and mental health resources in rural Oregon.
 - **Oregon Firearm Safety Coalition:** Promotes safe storage and suicide prevention efforts tailored to firearm owners.
 - **Telehealth Counseling Services:** Expanding virtual care to connect rural populations with licensed therapists and crisis intervention specialists.
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Cross-Community Initiatives

1. **Lethal Means Education:** Focus on training community members, teachers, and healthcare providers to recognize warning signs and promote safe storage as a suicide prevention measure.
2. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Use culturally specific outreach methods to spread messages about safe storage and mental health.
3. **Partnerships with Local Organizations:** Work with trusted groups within these communities to amplify impact and trust.

1. Firearms Safe Storage Programs

Recommendations

- **Enforce Existing Safe Storage Laws:** Oregon's Senate Bill 554 mandates that firearms be secured with trigger locks or stored in locked containers when not in use. Ensuring compliance through public education and enforcement is essential. [Oregon Public Broadcasting](#)



- **Public Education Campaigns:** Develop and disseminate materials that inform gun owners about the legal requirements and safety benefits of proper firearm storage. Utilize various media platforms to reach diverse communities.
- **Distribution of Safe Storage Devices:** Partner with local law enforcement and community organizations to provide free or subsidized gun safes and lock boxes to residents, particularly in areas with higher rates of gun ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- The Oregon Health Authority reports that in 2019, 82% of firearm deaths in Oregon were due to suicide. Proper firearm storage can significantly reduce access to means during crises.
[Oregon Government](#)
 - Research indicates that safe storage practices, such as using gun safes and trigger locks, are associated with a reduction in unintentional firearm injuries and deaths.
[Johns Hopkins University - Public Health](#)
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2. Medication Safe Storage Programs

Recommendations

- **Expand Drug Take-Back Programs:** Increase the number of secure medication drop-off sites and promote their use to prevent misuse of unused or expired medications. The Oregon Drug Take-Back Program offers such services statewide.
[Oregon Government](#)
- **Public Awareness Initiatives:** Educate the public on the dangers of improper medication storage and disposal, emphasizing the risks of accidental poisonings and environmental harm.
- **Provide Lockable Storage Solutions:** Distribute lockable medication storage boxes, especially to households with children or individuals at risk of substance misuse.

Supporting Evidence

- The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality highlights that improper disposal of medications can lead to environmental contamination and accidental poisonings.
[Oregon Government](#)
- The Oregon Drug Take-Back Program collected over 65,000 pounds of unwanted medications in its first year, indicating a significant need and public participation in safe disposal initiatives.
[Oregon Government](#)

3. Safe Storage for Mind-Altering Substances (e.g., Cannabis, Alcohol)

Recommendations

- **Child-Resistant Packaging:** Mandate that all cannabis products be sold in child-resistant packaging to prevent accidental ingestion by minors.
- **Home Storage Education:** Provide guidelines to consumers on safely storing alcohol and cannabis products out of reach of children and teenagers.
- **Community Outreach Programs:** Collaborate with local health departments and community organizations to raise awareness about the importance of safe storage of mind-altering substances.

Supporting Evidence

- The Oregon Poison Center
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Center has reported cases of accidental ingestion of cannabis edibles by children, underscoring the need for secure storage practices.

- Studies have shown that child-resistant packaging and public education can significantly reduce accidental poisonings related to mind-altering substances.

Implementation Framework

1. **Legislative Support:** Ensure that existing laws are enforced and consider introducing new legislation to address gaps in safe storage requirements.
2. **Community Partnerships:** Engage with local organizations, healthcare providers, and law enforcement to promote and facilitate safe storage practices.



3. **Continuous Evaluation:** Monitor the effectiveness of these programs through data collection and adjust strategies as needed to improve outcomes.

By adopting these evidence-based recommendations, Oregon can enhance community safety and reduce the incidence of injuries and fatalities associated with firearms, medications, and mind-altering substances.

Look to the Student Health Survey for data regarding use of prescription medications...and look at recommendations for best practices for children who take medications that live with other children

