HEALTH PRODUCTS
STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATION

Return Unwanted Medications and Used Medical Sharps

2025

Health Products Stewardship Association

CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL REPORT

Letter from the Chair of the Board

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Health Products Stewardship Association (HPSA), I am pleased to present our 2025 Consolidated Annual Report.

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This past year marked continued progress in strengthening the performance, reach, and impact of our stewardship programs across Canada. As regulatory requirements evolve and expectations for environmental responsibility increase, HPSA remains committed to delivering programs that are not only compliant, but also efficient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of our members, partners, and communities.

The Board has remained focused on ensuring strong governance and strategic alignment with HPSA's mission—to support members through the delivery of efficient and provincially compliant stewardship programs.

Throughout the year, we oversaw key initiatives aimed at enhancing operational effectiveness, strengthening stakeholder engagement, and supporting long-term program sustainability

A particular area of focus has been adaptability. As environmental stewardship continues to evolve at both provincial and national levels, HPSA must remain agile, anticipating regulatory changes and shifting public expectations.

Alongside this focus on adaptability, HPSA continues to prioritize credibility and impact as core organizational values. This foundation enables the organization to deliver measurable and sustained impact, advancing environmental outcomes while reinforcing public confidence in stewardship programs . The Board is confident that the organization is well positioned to navigate this dynamic landscape while continuing to deliver measurable impact.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our members for their continued trust and engagement, as well as the HPSA leadership team and staff for their dedication, professionalism, and results-driven approach.

We look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.

Kristen Willemsen
Board chair

Letter from the CEO

I am pleased to share the Health Products Stewardship Association's 2025 Consolidated Annual Report,

highlighting a year of strong performance, collaboration, and continued impact across our provincial programs in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.

In 2025, HPSA continued to deliver on its commitment to providing efficient, compliant stewardship solutions for post-consumer medications and medical sharps. Across our programs, we supported the collection of substantial volumes of health products' returns, contributing to the safe disposal of health products and the protection of both public health and the environment.

In 2025, our programs collectively supported the recovery of significant volumes of post-consumer health products, with more than 6.2 million kilograms of medications and 4.8 million kilograms of medical sharps collected since programs inceptions, and robust collection performance across all participating provinces.

These results reflect the strength of our national network of over 8,100 collection locations in 6 provinces, as well as the continued commitment of pharmacies, service providers, and stakeholders who play a critical role in program delivery.

This extensive reach ensures that Canadians have convenient and accessible options for returning unwanted medications and used medical sharps, reinforcing safe disposal behaviors at the community level.

Operationally, we maintained consistent service delivery and saw notable program activity across provinces, including:

- **Strong collection volumes in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia**
- **Continued growth in provinces such as New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island**
- **Ongoing collaboration with pharmacies, veterinary clinics, and service providers to maintain high participation levels**

Beyond operations, 2025 was also a year of continued focus on strengthening relationships—with members, regulators, and partners—and enhancing the visibility and understanding of proper health product disposal among Canadians. The successful recruitment of 20 additional members expands HPSA's collective impact, strengthening program coverage and ensuring that a greater share of health

products are managed responsibly through regulated stewardship programs.

Looking ahead, HPSA will continue to build on its strengths by enhancing program efficiency, supporting regulatory alignment, and exploring opportunities for innovation in stewardship delivery. Guided by our values—impact, credibility, and adaptability, we remain committed to delivering results that matter for our members and the communities we serve.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our members for their ongoing support, and to our partners and stakeholders for their collaboration and shared commitment to responsible stewardship.

Delphine Lagourgue
President & Chief Executive Officer

Vision, Mission and Values

Our beliefs

Our Mission

HPSA is a bridge between health care and the environment by offering programs for the safe disposal and return of medications and medical sharps used in Canadian homes.

Our Vision

Building a healthier and safer environment together.

How We Work

Making a difference

Our Values

Excellence

We strive for excellence in everything we do through evidence-based practice, learning and continuous improvement.

Together We Make A Difference

Our work as individuals and as an organization depends on the collective work and actions of others. We can only be successful when we have the trusting and transparent relationships that help us collaborate to reach a common goal.

Stewardship

We live up to the responsibilities entrusted to us by our members as we work to protect Canadians and the environment.

Equity

We strive to be impartial, honest and free from self-interest.

Our Impact

A 6 provinces from coast to coast perspective

For more than two decades, HPSA has remained committed to creating meaningful impact on behalf of its members.

As environmental stewards, the organization oversees the safe collection and responsible disposal of program materials, helping to keep them out of landfills and water systems.

HPSA operates within a highly coordinated and interdependent system that spans multiple jurisdictions, regulatory frameworks, and service delivery partners. Delivering safe and compliant stewardship programs across Canada requires the alignment of members, pharmacies, service providers, and provincial requirements—working together to manage post-consumer health products responsibly.

Since inception, HPSA programs have achieved safe management of significant volumes of post-consumer health products:

Total Collections:

(since inception)

6,270,541 kg

of unwanted medications

4,860,575 kg

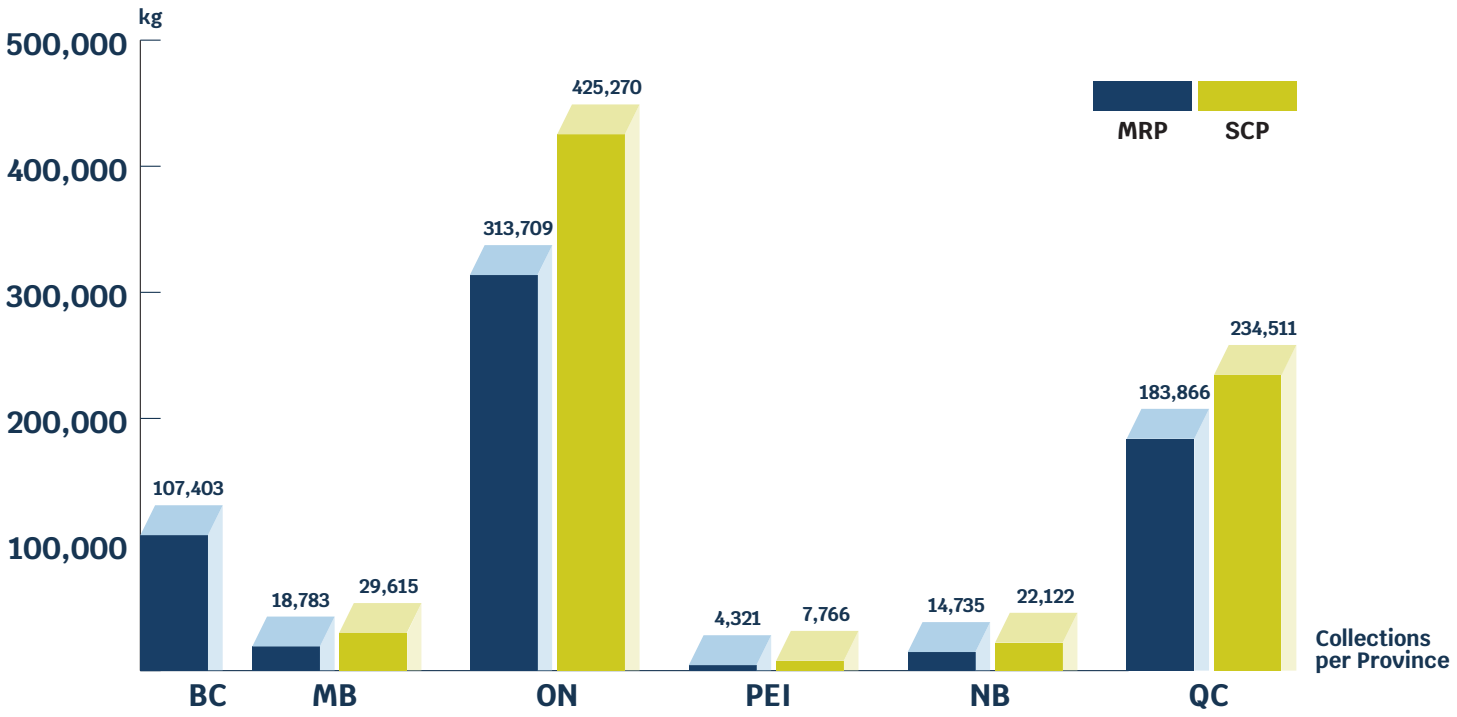
of used medical sharps

This cumulative impact underscores the strength of a shared stewardship model. One that enables members to meet their obligations while contributing to a broader system that protects Canadians and the environment.

2025 collections per province

Total medications (MRP) and total medical sharps (SCP) in kg

In 2025, this collective effort was supported by 201 members and 8,117 collection locations across participating provinces, delivering strong results:



The significant collection volumes achieved in 2025 underscore the year's success, accounting for 10% of all materials collected since inception.

2025 Total Collections:

642,953 kg
of unwanted medications

719,287 kg
of used medical sharps

2025 Participation

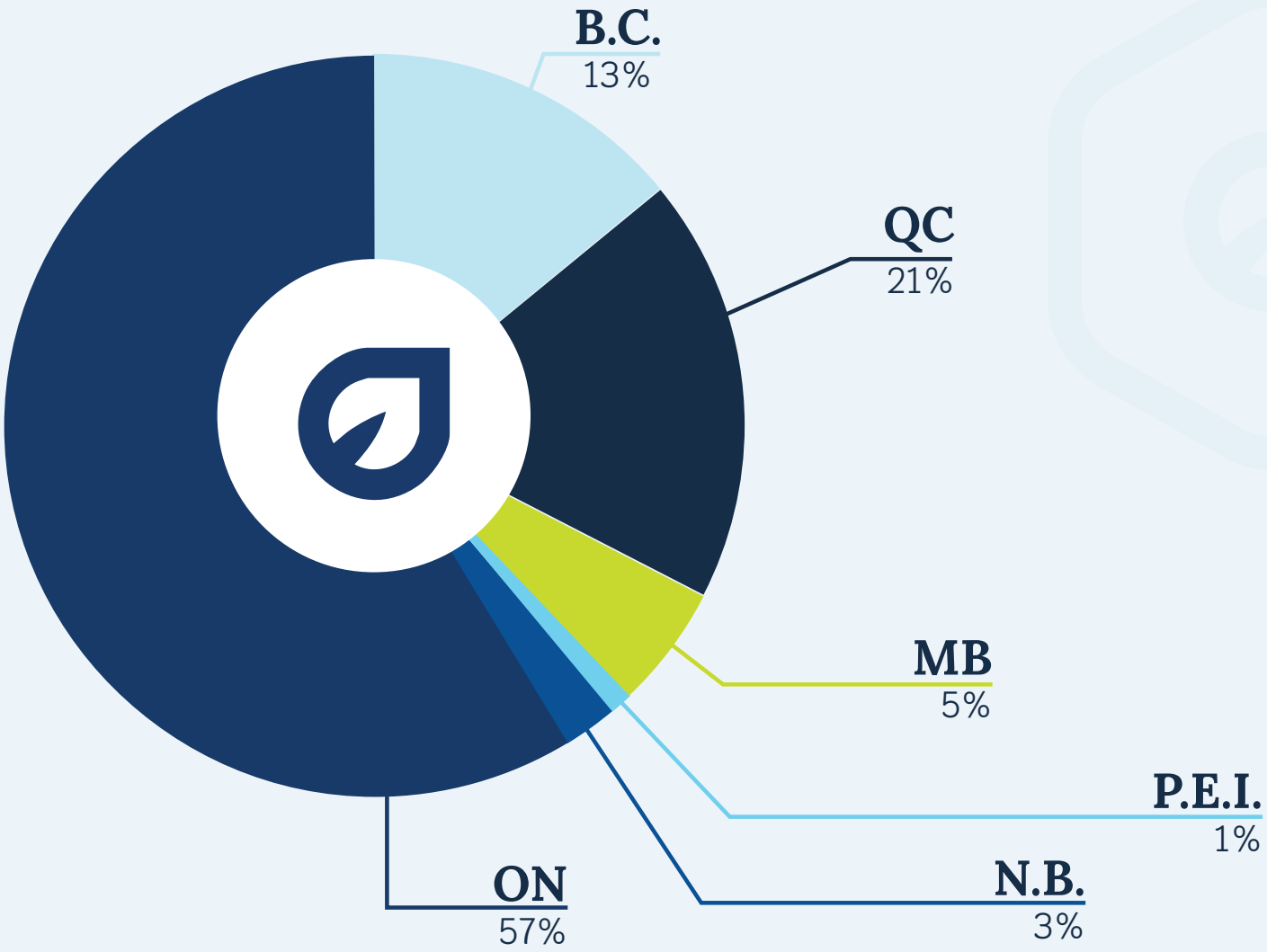
Total participation rate per province

Below, participation rate refers to the number of pharmacies or vet clinics in the provinces that are registered as HPSA collection locations.

Province	Collection Locations	Participation Rate per Province
British Columbia	1047	68%
Manitoba	401	84%
Ontario	4,666	95%
Quebec	1,729	73%
New Brunswick	220	93%
Prince Edward Island	50	100%

2025 Participation

Total collection locations distributions per province



Life Cycle of Unused Medications and Used Medical Sharps

The lifecycle of medications and medical sharps begins in the household, where residents identify unwanted or expired medications and used medical sharps for safe disposal.

To reduce risk, used medical sharps should be placed in approved sharps container, while unwanted medications should be sealed in a secure bag or remain in their original packaging if they are liquids or creams.

These materials are then brought to participating pharmacies, which serve as designated collection locations. Pharmacies accept returned medications and collect used sharps and store them in secure, compliant containers provided by HPSA to ensure safe handling and transportation.

The Health Products Stewardship Association (HPSA) coordinates the collection of these materials from pharmacies through licensed service providers. Collected waste is transported in accordance with regulatory requirements to authorized processing facilities.

At the final stage of the lifecycle, both the unwanted medications and used medical sharps are destroyed through high-temperature incineration and/or autoclaving at approved facilities. This process ensures the complete and safe destruction of pharmaceutical compounds and sharps, mitigating risks to public health and preventing environmental contamination.

Life Cycle of Unused or Expired Medications

From home to safe disposal

Consumer takes medication home and stores it in shelves and drawers.

Medication stored is either reused or left “just in case.”

Expired or unwanted medications should be brought back for safe disposal

Pills are emptied into a sealed bag. Liquids in original containers, labels removed.

Bag with medications are taken back to to a participating pharmacy.

Unwanted medications are safely disposed of through high temperature incineration.

Life Cycle of Used Medical Sharps

From home to safe disposal

Medical sharps and sharps container are picked up from pharmacy and stored safely at home.

After medical sharps are used, place used sharps into the approved container. Never in household garbage or recycling.

Continue using the same container until it reaches the fill line.

Once the container is full, permanently close it and return it back to the nearest collection location.

Collected sharps are managed safely, helping protect families, workers, and the environment.

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Program Performance by Province

- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- New Brunswick
- Prince Edward Island

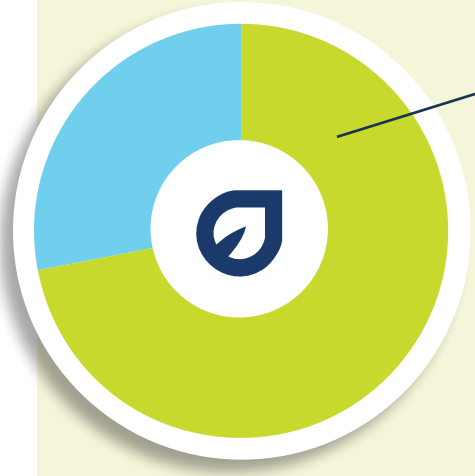
Program Performance by Province

Participation rates and collected amount

Below, participation rate refers to the number of pharmacies or vet clinics in the provinces that are registered as HPSA collection locations.

British Columbia

Province Participation Rate:



Collected Amount (kg):

2025	2024
107,538	98,786

Collection Locations: 1,047

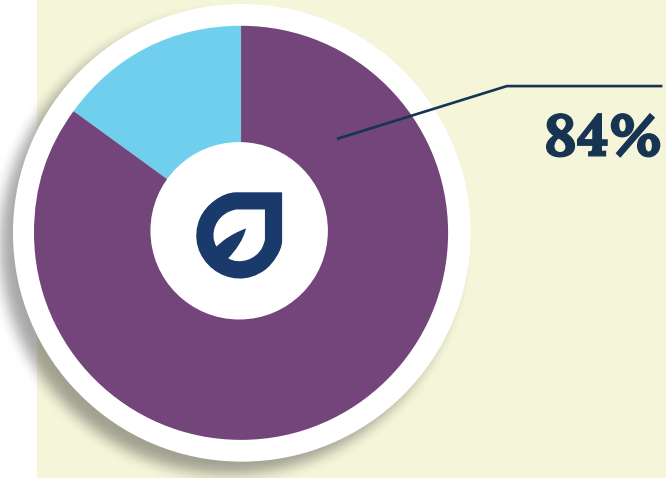
Medication Return Program launched in 2007

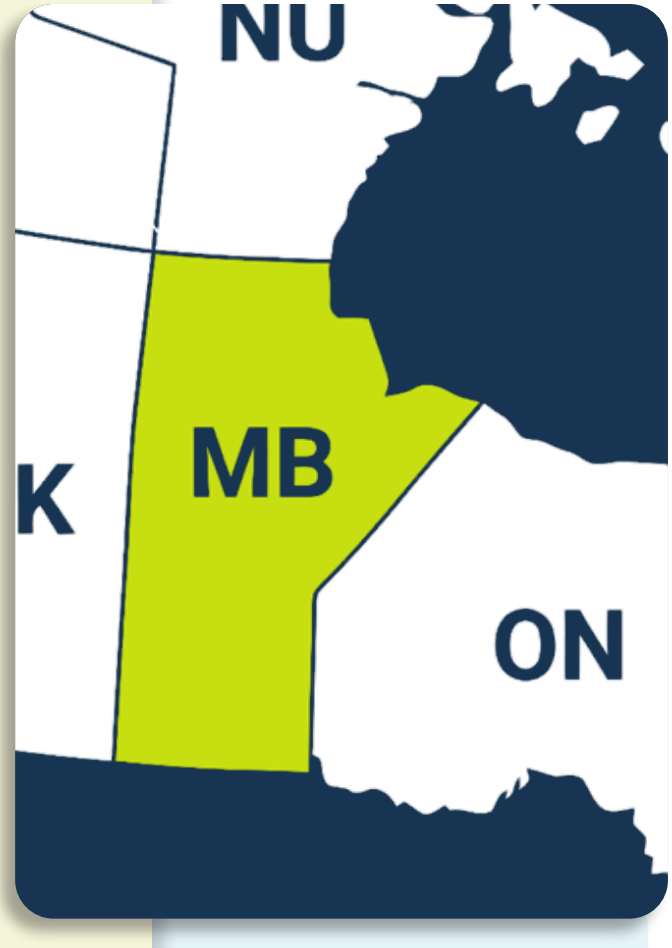
Program Performance by Province

Participation rates and collected amount

Manitoba

Province Participation Rate:





Collected Amount (kg):

	2025	2024
	18,782	19,124
	29,616	28,256

Collection Locations: 401

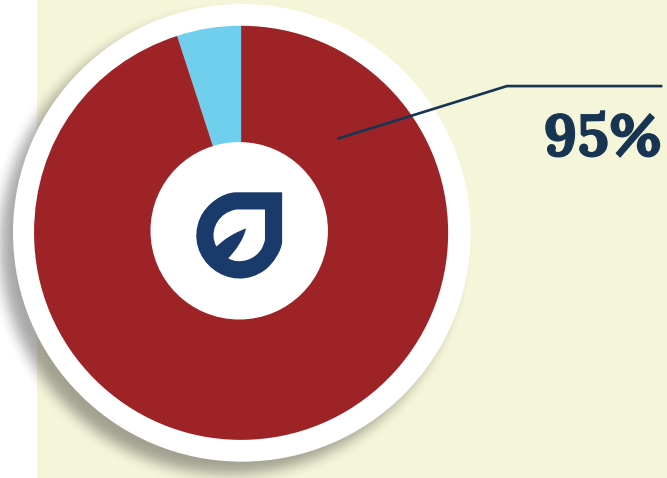
Medication Return Program launched in 2011 and Medical Sharps Collection Program launched in 2021

Program Performance by Province

Participation rates and collected amount

Ontario

Province Participation Rate:



Collected Amount (kg):

	2025	2024
	313,709	330,274
	425,271	452,203

Collection Locations: 4,666

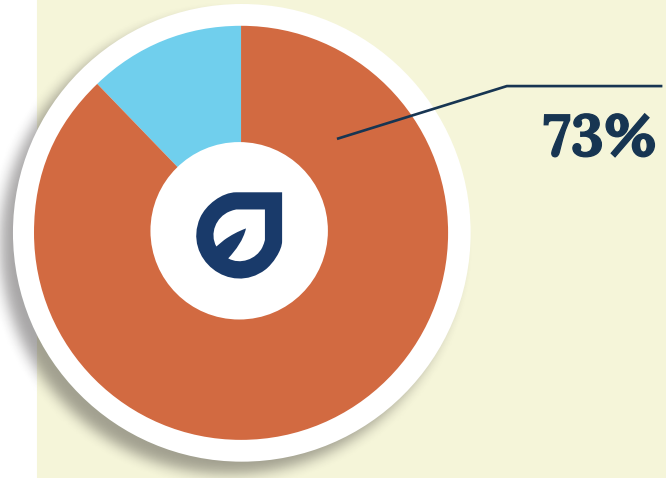
Medication Return Program and Medical Sharps Collection Program launched in 2013

Program Performance by Province

Participation rates and collected amount

Quebec

Province Participation Rate:



Collected Amount (kg):

	2025	2024
	183,867	47,854*
	234,512	52,002*

Collection Locations: 1729

Medication Return Program and Medical Sharps Collection Program launched in 2024

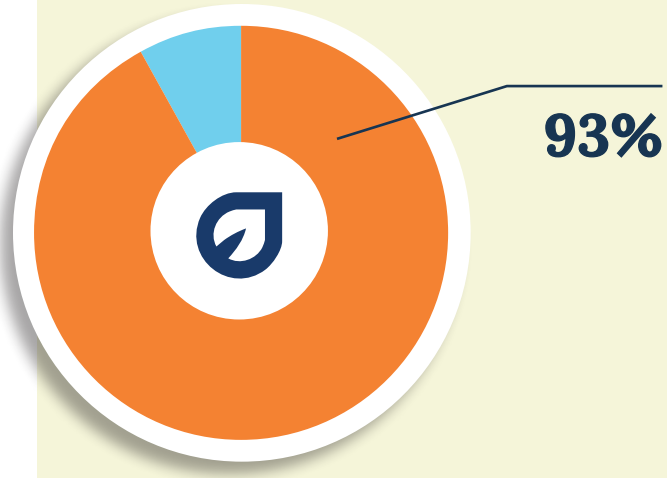
*2024 figures correspond to a 6-months period collection quantities

Program Performance by Province

Participation rates and collected amount

New Brunswick

Province Participation Rate:



Collected Amount (kg):

	2025	2024
	14,735	7,661
	22,122	11,754

Collection Locations: 220

Medication Return Program and Medical Sharps Collection Program launched in 2024

Program Performance by Province

Participation rates and collected amount

Prince Edward Island

Province Participation Rate:

100%

Collected Amount (kg):

	2025	2024
	4,321	3,784
	7,767	8,086

Collection Locations: 50

Medication Return Program and Medical Sharps Collection Program launched in 2015

Consumer Survey

Canada-wide results

The 2025 Consumer Survey provides valuable insights into how Canadians in regulated provinces manage unwanted medications and used medical sharps, helping HPSA identify opportunities to strengthen awareness, participation, and safe disposal practices.

The results highlight continued progress across Canada with nearly two-thirds of Canadians who know that unused medications and used medical sharps should be returned for safe disposal.

65% report returning medications and 74% report returning sharps through collection programs.

BC	**64% of British Columbians** reported returning unwanted medications to a collection location for safe disposal.
MB	**57% of Manitobans** reported returning unwanted medications, demonstrating continued participation in safe medication disposal programs.
ON	**66% of Ontarians** rated the medication and medical sharps return system as convenient and easy to use.
QC	Quebec led awareness of medication return locations, with **59% of residents** knowing where to return unwanted medications for safe disposal.
NB	New Brunswick achieved the highest awareness of medical sharps collection locations, with **71% of residents** knowing where to return used sharps.
PEI	Prince Edward Island recorded the highest medication return participation rate, with **76% of residents** reporting they returned unwanted medications to a collection location.

Consumer Survey

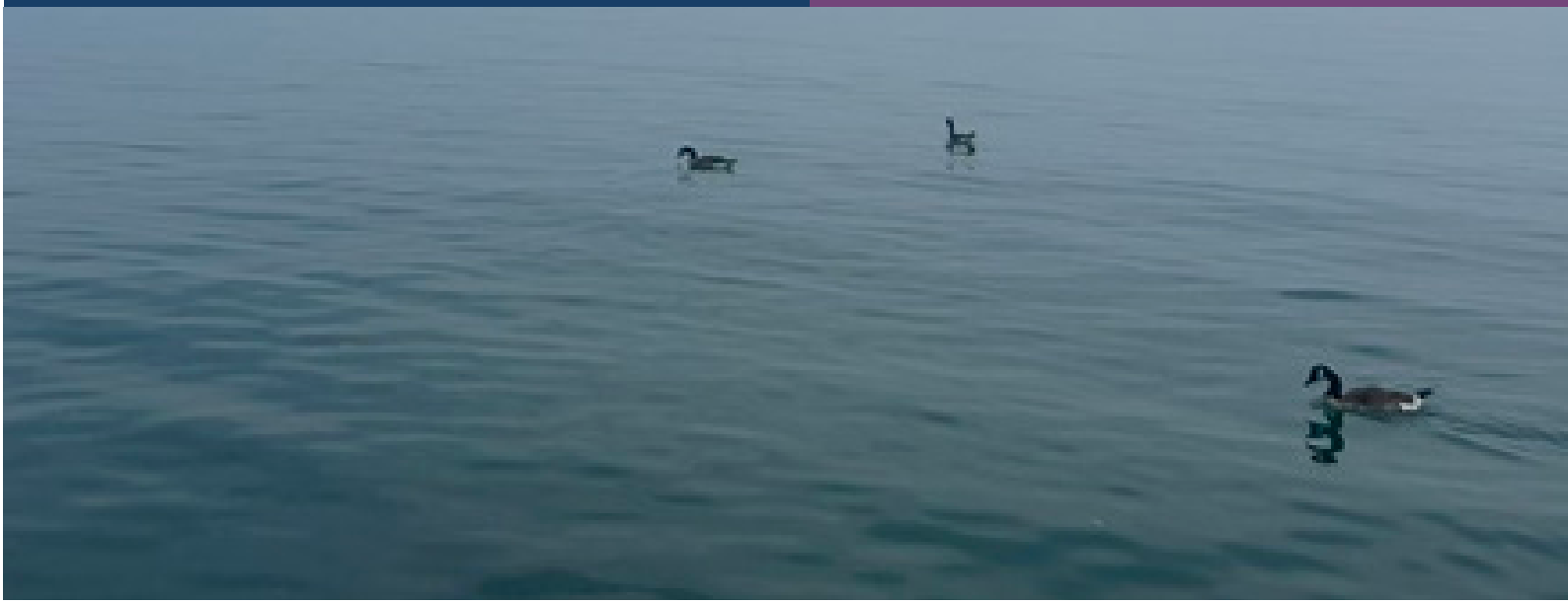
Canada-wide results

62% of consumers
reported already knowing where to return their used medical sharps.

71% of Canadians correctly identified
how to prepare unused and expired medications for safe collection at locations working with HPSA.

49% of consumers
knows where to return their unwanted or expired medications.

67% of Canadians understand that
correct disposal keeps our environment safer.



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