

Get Smart Colorado

Last month, Get Smart Colorado, a coalition of community, professional and government partners, launched a public “call to action” campaign to educate Coloradans about appropriate use and proper disposal of antibiotics to prevent antibiotic resistance.

Based at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), the coalition promotes the careful use of antibiotics. Its mission is to minimize the problem of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in Colorado by providing education about and support for the appropriate use of antibiotics. It accomplishes this through the collaborative efforts of profession, academic, community, government, labor and industry partners.

The October, 2008 campaign, a joint effort between state and local health officials and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), featured English and Spanish information cards containing guidance about the proper use and disposal of antibiotics that were displayed throughout the month at Safeway pharmacy counters throughout the state. The campaign emphasized the importance of finishing all antibiotics when they are prescribed for treating bacterial infections, not using antibiotics to treat viral infections, and not using expired medications.

Get Smart Colorado is supported by grants from The Colorado Health Foundation and the CDC. Its partners and supporters include health care practices and over 1,500 physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners across Colorado, as well as professional and public health organizations, pharmaceutical industry companies, health plans and pharmacies, community organizations and academic institutions. Kelly Kast serves as coordinator for the program.

Providers supporting the coalition have partnered with the Colorado Clinical Guidelines Collaborative to revise the guidelines for appropriate use of antibiotics for acute respiratory infections. The coalition has also worked with Safeway, King Soopers and City Markets stores to display educational stands in their pharmacies, participated in 9Health Fairs statewide and partnered with The Children’s Hospital to develop a new educational brochure for parents.

For more information, visit the coalition’s website at www.GetSmartColorado.com.