

Governor Wolf Announces \$5 Million Funding for Naloxone to First Responders

October 05, 2017

Press Release, Public Health, Public Safety, Substance Use Disorder

Harrisburg, Pa. – Governor Wolf today announced that the \$5 million included in the 2017-18 budget to provide naloxone to first responders in Pennsylvania is now available. Details of the application process and benefits of naloxone will be provided at a press conference at 2 p.m. today in the Capitol Reception Room with representatives of the departments of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), Health (DOH), and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD).

“Naloxone, a life-saving medication, is making a difference in the heroin and opioid epidemic in Pennsylvania and why I included funding for it in my 2017-18 budget,” Governor Wolf said. “This program will create a fast, efficient means of getting these life-saving kits in the hands of first responders; those people on the front line of the epidemic, and responsible not only for saving lives, but getting people into treatment via the warm handoff program, and ultimately into recovery.”

More than 60,000 Naloxone kits, which include two, 4-milligram doses in each, will be available to all 67 counties over a two-year period using the funding. The kits are supplied by Adapt Pharma, headquartered in Radnor.

“Pennsylvania continues to lead the way in improving awareness and access to this potentially life-saving medication,” said Mike Kelly, President, U.S. Operations, Adapt Pharma. “We applaud Governor Wolf’s commitment to this initiative as well as the commonwealth’s broader initiatives to address this epidemic.”

PCCD is releasing a request for applications to support the provision of intranasal naloxone kits to first responders today. NARCAN®(naloxone HCl) Nasal Spray is needle-free and does not require assembly. It’s designed for ease of use for nonmedical personnel.

One main point-of-contact for each county or region will be identified to coordinate the process of getting the kits into the hands of first responders. That point-of-contact will be responsible for identifying first responder needs for naloxone within that county or region.

The Wolf Administration’s Physician General and Acting Secretary for DOH Dr. Rachel Levine issued a standing order for naloxone in April of this year. Since that time, more than 3,900 lives have been saved with naloxone. In addition, the Gov. Wolf and state agencies have been increasing efforts in the heroin and opioid epidemic fight in multiple additional areas, including numerous programs and initiatives:

- Working with the legislature to establish a new law limiting the number of opioids that can be prescribed to a minor and to individuals discharged from emergency rooms to seven days;
- Strengthening the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) through the legislative process so that doctors are required and able to check the system each time they prescribe opioids and benzodiazepines. To date, there have been more than 12 million patient searches made on the system;
- Forming new prescribing guidelines to help doctors who provide opioid prescriptions to their patients, including guidelines specific to orthopedics and sports medicine;
- Creating the warm handoff guideline to facilitate referrals from the emergency department to substance abuse treatment;
- Teaming with the legislature to establish education curriculum on safe prescribing for medical schools;
- Educating and encouraging patients to properly use, store and dispose of unused prescription medications through drug take-back initiatives, and expanding the number of drug take-back locations to nearly 700.

For more information on the standing order for naloxone, visit the Department of Health’s website. For more information about the naloxone application process, visit the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency’s website.

