



TITLE

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY BASED NALOXONE KITS

SCOPE

Provincial

DOCUMENT #

HCS-246

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Clinical Operations Executive Committee

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE

December 2, 2019

SPONSOR

Executive Director, Communicable Disease Control

REVISION EFFECTIVE DATE

Not applicable

PARENT DOCUMENT TITLE, TYPE AND NUMBER

Not applicable

SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE

December 2, 2022

NOTE: The first appearance of terms in bold in the body of this document (except titles) are defined terms – please refer to the Definitions section.

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OBJECTIVES

- To promote the distribution of **Community Based Naloxone Kits** without an **authorized prescriber's** order in **Alberta Health Services (AHS) settings** to **persons at risk**, their families and friends, and to members of the public requesting a kit, in order to prevent opioid **poisoning** (i.e., overdose) related deaths.
- To outline the necessary education and training requirements for persons distributing the Community Based Naloxone Kits.

PRINCIPLES

The opioid crisis in Alberta is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach including awareness, treatment, and harm reduction. AHS is committed to working with a variety of stakeholders to reduce harm and prevent deaths related to opioid use.

AHS is committed to providing low-barrier access to naloxone. Distribution of the Community Based Naloxone Kits is part of an overall harm reduction strategy that aims to reduce morbidity and mortality rates related to the opioid crisis.

APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, Students, Volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).

ELEMENTS

1. Points of Emphasis

- 1.1 Community Based Naloxone Kits are publicly funded through the Community Based Naloxone Program for persons at risk, their families and friends, and members of the public requesting the kit.
- 1.2 AHS settings (e.g., sites) shall assess the risks and needs of patients and families to determine the appropriateness of areas to register with the Community Based Naloxone Program to distribute Community Based Naloxone Kits through site-established processes.
- 1.3 Areas distributing Community Based Naloxone Kits should establish a process for distribution with appropriate approvals from the Site Leader.
- 1.4 AHS personnel who are trained may distribute Community Based Naloxone Kits without an authorized prescriber's order to persons at risk, their families and friends, and to members of the public requesting one.
- 1.5 While Community Based Naloxone Kits may be distributed on hospital grounds, they are intended to be used outside of a hospital setting in the community.

2. Naloxone

- 2.1 Naloxone is a fast-acting drug used to temporarily reverse the effects of opioid poisoning to help restore breathing. Naloxone is safe for all ages.
- 2.2 Naloxone is not effective against central nervous system depression caused by non-opioid drugs (e.g., benzodiazepines, tranquilizers, barbiturates, alcohol, and psychostimulants). Naloxone should still be given as it can reverse the effects of the opioid component of the overdose.
- 2.3 Naloxone is active in the body for only 20 to 90 minutes but the effects of most opioids last longer. This means that the effects of naloxone may wear off before the opioids are gone from the body, which could cause breathing to stop again. Thus, it is important to activate the emergency response process in your work setting. Naloxone may need to be provided more than once.
- 2.4 Treatment of opioid poisoning is symptom-based and may include, but is not limited to, initiation of rescue breathing, oxygen, administration of naloxone, and initiation of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if required.
- 2.5 More information on drug use, including how to respond to an opioid poisoning and additional educational resources, can be found on MyLearningLink, www.ahs.ca/naloxone, and the AHS DrugSafe.ca (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/page12491.aspx>) and Health Canada websites.

3. Distribution

- 3.1 Prior to the distribution of the Community Based Naloxone Kits, the AHS setting shall register as a designated distribution site with the Community Based Naloxone Program. Information on this process can be found at www.ahs.ca/naloxone or by contacting naloxone.kit@ahs.ca for more information.
- 3.2 All personnel distributing Community Based Naloxone Kits shall complete the required AHS Community Based Naloxone e-learning module available on MyLearningLink.
- 3.3 When it is determined that a Community Based Naloxone Kit should be distributed, the trained personnel shall follow their area's process and offer education to the patient, their family or friends, or members of the public. Education and training is not mandatory and can be refused by the individual.
- 3.4 Training should include but is not limited to:
 - a) Opioid poisoning prevention;
 - b) how to assess for signs of opioid poisoning
 - c) the importance of calling 911;
 - d) how to perform rescue breathing;
 - e) how to draw up the naloxone;
 - f) the dosing of naloxone;
 - g) how to administer an intramuscular injection;
 - h) how to assess the response of the patient to determine the need for additional doses while awaiting the arrival of Emergency Medical Services;
 - i) how to report the use of a Community Based Naloxone Kit; and
 - j) how to obtain a new Community Based Naloxone Kit.
- 3.5 Always open a Community Based Naloxone Kit and ensure that all contents of the kit are inside before handing it out. Make note of the lot number and expiry date to ensure the kit is up-to-date.
- 3.6 If appropriate, provide additional support or referral to other services.

4. Documentation

- 4.1 If appropriate, document in the patient **health record** the distribution of the Community Based Naloxone Kit, the education provided, and where applicable, additional assessment/interventions for other needs and referrals initiated.

5. Reporting

- 5.1 Areas shall complete Community Based Naloxone Kit distribution reporting according to the Community Based Naloxone Program requirements (refer to www.ahs.ca/naloxone).

DEFINITIONS

Alberta Health Services (AHS) setting means any environment where treatment/procedures and other health services are delivered by, on behalf of or in conjunction with, Alberta Health Services.

Authorized prescriber means a health care professional who is permitted by Federal and Provincial legislation, their regulatory college, Alberta Health Services, and practice setting (where applicable) to prescribe medications.

Community Based Naloxone Kits means the kits provided by the Community Based Naloxone Program that include the necessary supplies for the safe administration of naloxone, which is a medication that can restore breathing to someone having an overdose from opioid drugs.

Health record means the Alberta Health Services legal record of the patient's diagnostic, treatment and care information.

Persons at risk means people at risk from harm related to substance use and potential drug overdose.

Poisoning means experiencing the toxic effects of a drug or substance.

REFERENCES

- Alberta Health Services Resources:
 - *Community Based Naloxone e-learning Module*

VERSION HISTORY

Date	Action Taken
Click here to enter a date	Optional: Choose an item