OBJECTIVES

- To authorize health care providers working in community settings to distribute Overdose Response kits (Take Home Naloxone [THN] kits) to persons at risk, their families, and friends in order to facilitate harm reduction strategies and to prevent opioid related deaths.

- To promote widespread distribution of Overdose Response kits by health care providers to persons at risk, their families, and friends.

- To outline the necessary education and training requirements for health care providers distributing the Overdose Response kits.

- To support health care providers, persons at risk, families, and friends with education in the assessment of overdose, overdose response, safe injection practices and assessment of the patient responses.

PRINCIPLES

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

AHS is committed to increasing the awareness of and providing low barrier access to Overdose Response kits and related strategies. The distribution of Overdose Response kits is an effective 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), working in community settings.

ELEMENTS

1. Overdose Response kits may be distributed to persons at risk, their families, and friends by Health care providers working in Community settings.

2. Prior to the distribution of Overdose Response kits, Health care providers shall complete the required AHS training (refer to AHS Take Home Naloxone Training Program).

3. Health care providers when distributing Overdose Response kits shall provide education to persons at risk, their families, and friends, including but not limited to:
   3.1 how to assess for signs of overdose;
   3.2 the importance of calling 911;
   3.3 how to perform rescue breathing;
   3.4 how to draw up the naloxone;
   3.5 the dosing of naloxone;
   3.6 how to administer an intramuscular injection; and
   3.7 how to assess the response of the patient to determine the need for additional doses while awaiting the arrival of Emergency Medical Services.

4. Documentation shall include the requirements under the program around distribution, such as the steps taken to distribute the Overdose Response kit, education provided and, where applicable, additional assessment for other needs and referrals initiated (Refer to the AHS Naloxone Kit Dispensing Record).

5. Health care providers should assess the health and socioeconomic needs of the person at risk and provide support and direction to other services as appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

Community setting means all AHS settings, including contracted service provider settings, with the exclusion of hospital settings.

Health care provider means any person who provides goods or services to a patient, inclusive of health care professionals, staff, students, volunteers and other persons acting on behalf of or in conjunction with Alberta Health Services.
Overdose Response kit (Take Home Naloxone kit [THN]) means 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.

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

REFERENCES

- Alberta Health Services Forms:
  - Naloxone Kit Dispensing Record (20263)
  - Naloxone Kit Site Registration (20236)
- Alberta Health Services Resources:
  - Take Home Naloxone Training Program

VERSION HISTORY

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