



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wolf Administration Reminds Pennsylvanians to Keep Naloxone on Hand to Combat Overdose Deaths

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) Secretary Jen Smith joined Department of Health (DOH) Physician General Dr. Denise Johnson, and the Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) at South Central EMS to encourage Pennsylvanians to keep naloxone on hand and highlight how residents, businesses, and first responders can access naloxone.

“As we work to deal with the increase in overdose deaths across the commonwealth, expanding access to naloxone continues to be a top priority of the Wolf Administration,” said DDAP Secretary Jen Smith. “You never know when you may come across an individual suffering from an overdose. There are numerous ways that Pennsylvanians can access life-saving naloxone and we’re here today to encourage that people take advantage of those resources.”

Since 2014, previous Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine and current Physician General Dr. Denise Johnson, signed [standing orders](#) allowing members of the general public and first responders to obtain naloxone from their local pharmacy. More recently, Pennsylvania partnered with Prevention Point Pittsburgh and NEXT Distro to support a [statewide mail-based naloxone program](#) for individuals to request medication for personal use.

“We know that naloxone is one of our greatest tools in the fight against substance use disorder,” Dr. Johnson said. “Carrying naloxone is the simplest and most direct way to assist in the event of an overdose. When used as directed, naloxone is fast acting and can save a life without risk to the intervening bystander.”

South Central EMS is designated as the Centralized Coordinating Entity (CCE) for Dauphin County through the [Naloxone for First Responders Program](#). County/Regional CCEs serve as the primary point of contact for first responders within their communities to request and receive naloxone at no cost. CCEs distribute available naloxone to the following priority first responder groups:

- Organizations that provide services and supports to individuals who are currently using substances, such as harm reduction organizations;

- Individuals with substance use disorder (SUD) and/or opioid use disorder (OUD) leaving the county and/or state correctional facilities;
- Individuals leaving a SUD/OUD treatment facility and/or in recovery;
- Individuals receiving care in emergency departments for an overdose;
- Probation and Parole Officers;
- Law enforcement agencies (including municipal police, sheriff's offices, campus police, campus security, school resource officers, and park rangers);
- Firefighters (both volunteer and paid firefighters);
- Emergency medical services, advanced life support, basic life support, and emergency medical technicians; and/or
- Other first responder organizations serving individuals and communities impacted by substance use that are legally organized and trained to respond to overdose emergencies and administer intranasal naloxone.

Since November 2017, through the Naloxone for First Responders Program, CCEs have distributed more than 114,069 kits of NARCAN to first responder groups, resulting in more than 19,138 reported overdose reversals to date.

"PCCD remains committed to the distribution of naloxone throughout the state to prevent overdose deaths and save lives," Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency Executive Director Michael Pennington said. "Our agency will continue to work with our partners at the state and local levels to increase availability of this life-saving medication for individuals and communities with the greatest need."

DDAP recently [announced](#) its continued efforts to combat SUD and overdose deaths, including the rise in stimulant and polysubstance use. By establishing the Interagency Substance Use Response Team, the Wolf Administration is restructuring efforts to address all substance use disorders, by bringing together key players to resolve policy, procedural, and funding matters in relation to the addiction crisis across the commonwealth.

To learn more about DDAP's efforts in combatting the addiction crisis, visit ddap.pa.gov.

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