

Public Health and CVS Health Make Overdose-Reversal Drug Available Without Prescription at DE CVS Pharmacies

DOVER – The Delaware Division of Public Health and CVS Health announced today that the opioid overdose-reversal medication naloxone is now available without an individual prescription at all of the 20 CVS Pharmacy locations in Delaware, including those located inside Target stores. CVS pharmacists will be able to dispense naloxone to patients without an individual prescription under a statewide standing order issued by the Division of Public Health (DPH).

“By making naloxone available to the public without a prescription, CVS Health has taken an important step in helping us combat the opioid epidemic here in Delaware,” said Governor John Carney. “Naloxone can give people a second chance to get medical care and be connected to resources to treat their addiction. We greatly appreciate their partnership.”

“Naloxone is a safe and effective antidote to opioid overdoses and by expanding access to this medication in our pharmacies in Delaware we can help save lives,” said Tom Davis, RPh, Vice President of Pharmacy Professional Services at CVS Pharmacy. “CVS Health is dedicated to helping the communities we serve address and prevent prescription drug abuse and we are expanding access to naloxone to give more people a chance to get the help they need for recovery.”

In July, Governor Carney signed [Senate Bill 48](#), which expanded

community access to naloxone by ensuring pharmacists had the same legal protections as doctors, peace officers and good Samaritans. Pharmacists can now dispense the medicine responsibly without potential legal, criminal, or disciplinary actions due to injuries or death sustained in connection with dispensing the drug. Naloxone will be available at the pharmacy counter in participating pharmacies to anyone who is educated on its appropriate use and signs an acknowledgement form. DPH hopes that this measure, in combination with a revised standing order allowing pharmacists to dispense naloxone nasal spray, will increase access for those concerned about someone at risk of an overdose.

“Our first priority is to save lives, and expanding access to this overdose-reversing medication through local pharmacies gives more people in the community the opportunity to help us do that,” said Dr. Rattay. “We see no signs of the opioid epidemic slowing and we need all the tools at our disposal to turn the tide.”

Overdose deaths in Delaware climbed from 172 in 2012 to 228 in 2015, and then jumped to 308 deaths in 2016. There have been approximately 190 suspected drug overdose deaths to date in 2017. First responders administered the life-saving medication naloxone more than 1,535 times in 2016 and 1,280 times in the first half of 2017.

“Addiction is a chronic disease,” said Dr. Kara Odom Walker, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). “As we expand access, we also need to connect Delawareans suffering from addiction to comprehensive and person-centered treatment services so they can begin their recovery.”

For more information about how to access naloxone at the pharmacy and to receive training on how to use it, visit [HelpisHereDE.com/Get-Help/Overdose-Response](https://www.helpisHereDE.com/Get-Help/Overdose-Response). HelpIsHere.com is DHSS’ one-stop clearinghouse website for information on

prevention, treatment and recovery resources in Delaware, and learning about the signs of addiction.

Within three to five minutes after administration, naloxone can counteract the life-threatening respiratory depression of an opioid-related overdose and stabilize a person's breathing, which buys time for emergency medical help to arrive. DPH recommends calling 9-1-1 immediately if you find someone in the midst of a suspected overdose, starting rescue breathing, and then administering naloxone. Naloxone is not a replacement for emergency medical care and seeking immediate help and follow-up care is still vital.

“ ‘If we had a 911 Good Samaritan law or Narcan law, your son might very well be alive today.’ Those were the words of the detective investigating my son, Greg's, accidental heroin overdose,” said David Humes, board member of atTAcK addiction. “I've lived with those words every day for over five years. With naloxone now being made available over-the-counter, other loved ones won't have to live with those words. Greater access to naloxone means more lives will be saved. More people will get a second chance.”

For a list of permanent drug collection sites to safely dispose of unused prescription medication, visit permanent collection sites, visit DPH at <http://dhss.delaware.gov/dph/hsp/hhdrugtakeback.html>.

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting

health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.