

Iowa Department of Public Health
Division of Behavioral Health/Bureau of Substance Abuse
Opioid Update: January 2020

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) offers the Opioid Update to share information about opioid use and Iowa's efforts to address the national opioid epidemic. Please feel free to submit topics to Julie Jones at julie.jones@idph.iowa.gov.

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Department News

IDPH and UIHC Launch Statewide Tele-Naloxone Project

Iowans who want to be prepared in the event they encounter someone experiencing an opioid overdose can now obtain free naloxone (Narcan nasal spray) through the statewide Tele-Naloxone Project. The result of a partnership between the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC), the project hopes to remove the barriers of cost and access for individuals.

Funded by the federal State Opioid Response grant, individuals wanting to obtain naloxone participate in a brief consultation with a UIHC pharmacist using a mobile phone platform. Then, a free kit(s) is mailed to the individual anywhere in the state. "Cost should not be a barrier when it comes to saving someone's life from an overdose. Through this effort our hope is it no longer will be," said IDPH Opioid Initiatives Director Kevin Gabbert.

"The great thing about this project is that it increases awareness of opioid overdoses and increases access to naloxone," said UIHC Ambulatory Pharmacy Director Lisa Mascardo. "We look forward to working closely with individuals in the community," noting that each person can participate in the program regardless of whether they have received a supply in the past.

Anyone who may be in a position to assist in the event of an opioid overdose is encouraged to receive Narcan education and have a supply on hand. Since implementing the program, nearly 400 requests for consultations have been submitted.

Naloxone is safe and easy to use, but most importantly, it may save a life in the event of opioid overdose. For more information and to order naloxone, visit www.naloxoneiowa.org.

Opioid Overdose and Naloxone Administration Reminder

IDPH would like to remind Iowans that although Naloxone is a valuable tool that can be used in reversing an opioid overdose, one of the most important steps to take is to immediately call 911 or seek medical attention. Because the effects of Naloxone can last as little as 30 minutes but many opioids can remain in the body much longer, immediate medical attention needs to be received or the individual is at risk for a recurrence of overdose symptoms.

For more information on symptoms of an opioid overdose, please click on the following link: [Opioid Overdose Recognition and Response](#).

Expiration of IDPH Mandatory Reporting of Naloxone Administration

In an effort to better understand and address opioid overdoses in Iowa, the administration of naloxone for a suspected opioid overdose was made a temporarily reportable condition on July 1, 2018. This order will expire December 31, 2019. A summary of these reports is below.

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) received 1,570 reported administrations from 110 health care facilities across the state. A few notable measures from those reports include:

- **Gender:**
53% male; 47% female
- **Age:**
20 and younger: 6%
21-30: 17%
31-40: 18%
41-50: 15%
51-60: 19%
61 and older: 25%
- **Race:**
79% White
12% Black or African-American
7% Unknown
2% Missing
- **Arrival:**
81% arrived by EMS to the hospital organization; 15% arrived by private vehicle
- **Number of doses administered:**
1 dose: 64.33%
2 doses: 23.44%
3 doses: 7.20%
4 or more doses: 3.92%
Unknown: 1.11%
- **Substance Use Disorder Treatment Referral:**
58 out of 977 patients for whom data was reported were referred for substance use disorder services

This information has helped provide insight into our public health needs and challenges, and enabled targeted interventions like multi-disciplinary community conversations, enhanced focus on resources for linkage to care, and new initiatives like the recently launched Tele-Naloxone Project. IDPH remains committed to working with all of our partners on this issue and would like to thank you for all the work you do to support us in our mission to protect and improve the health of Iowans.

For more information regarding the expiration of the Mandatory Reporting Order, please contact Kevin Gabbert at kevin.gabbert@idph.iowa.gov.

Upcoming Trainings

National Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit: April 13-16 (Nashville)

The Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit is the largest national collaboration of professionals from local, state and federal agencies, business, academia, treatment providers and allied communities impacted by prescription drug abuse and heroin use. It is *the* event for decision makers and allied professionals working to address this public health emergency.

To learn more about the summit or to register, please click on the following link: [Rx Summit](#)