
New York State Department of Health

Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs

Effective April 1, 2006, the NYS Department of Health is authorized to approve Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs.

In an opioid overdose, the individual becomes sedated and gradually loses the urge to breathe. Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs are effective in preventing fatal opioid overdoses.

Fatal Opioid Overdoses Can Be Prevented

Most overdoses are not instantaneous and the majority of them are witnessed by others. Many overdose fatalities are preventable, especially if witnesses have had appropriate training and are prepared to respond in a safe and effective manner. Prevention measures include education on risk factors (such as polydrug use and recent abstinence), recognition of the overdose and an appropriate response. Response includes contacting emergency medical services (EMS) and providing resuscitation. Resuscitation consists of rescue breathing, and/or administration of an FDA-approved drug (i.e., naloxone) to immediately reverse the effects of heroin overdose.

Requirements for Offering an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program

To operate an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program, eligible providers must:

- Register with the NYS Department of Health and obtain a certificate of approval, which is effective for two years and may be renewed for subsequent two-year periods;
- Have a Program Director who has overall responsibility for the Program;
- Have a Clinical Director (i.e., physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner) who provides clinical oversight of the Program;
- Recruit and train overdose responders;
- Dispense opioid antagonists (i.e., naloxone) to trained responders in accordance with laws, rules and regulations;
- Maintain and provide response supplies (e.g., latex gloves, sharps containers);
- Establish and maintain a record keeping system (e.g., opioid antagonist administration usage reports and forms); and,
- Report administrations of opioid antagonists to the NYS Department of Health.

Opioids include:
heroin, morphine,
codeine, methadone,
oxycodone (Oxycontin,
Percodan, Percocet),
hydrocodone (Vicodin),
fentanyl (Duragesic)
and hydromorphone
(Dilaudid).

**Who is Eligible to Offer
an Opioid Overdose
Prevention Program?**
hospitals, clinics, health
care practitioners, drug
treatment programs,
community-based
organizations and local
health departments

Additional Information

For additional information call the NYS Department of Health AIDS Institute at: 212/417-4770.