

AmeriHealth Caritas Delaware

Provider Bulletin

Background

More than 300 Delaware residents died from an opioid-related overdose in 2016. That year, naloxone (Narcan) was administered to 1,535 individuals by first responders in Delaware (WDEL, August 9, 2017). Naloxone is an FDA-approved opioid antagonist that temporarily stops or reverses the effects of an opioid overdose and restores breathing within two to eight minutes. The naloxone effect lasts from 20 to 90 minutes. Two of the most common ways that naloxone is administered are intranasally (nasal spray) and the auto-injector.

Individuals who use opioids, family members, and friends can access naloxone from their local pharmacy after completing an education program on its administration. This program is often available at the pharmacy and at local providers throughout the state. There is no copay for naloxone, and there is no charge to AmeriHealth Caritas Delaware members for prescribed naloxone.

Purpose

In light of the opioid epidemic, it is the intent of AmeriHealth Caritas Delaware to provide persons receiving opiates for chronic pain management and/or substance abuse treatment services in Delaware with immediate access to emergency treatment for an opioid overdose and access to appropriate medical and behavioral health treatment. This bulletin will increase the likelihood that persons who overdose on opioids will survive and have an opportunity for sustained recovery.

If a member needs behavioral health treatment, please contact Member Services:

- Diamond State Health Plan (DSHP) and Delaware Healthy Children Program (DHCP): **1-844-211-0966**.
- DSHP-Plus and DSHP-Plus Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS): **1-855-777-6617**.



On-site maintenance, administration, and prescription of naloxone

All levels of licensed and AmeriHealth Caritas Delaware contracted substance abuse service and chronic pain management providers are strongly encouraged to:

1. Maintain naloxone kits on-site in all of their programs at all times.
2. Ensure there are staff present on all shifts who are trained to administer naloxone to individuals known to be — or who are suspected of — experiencing an opioid overdose.
3. Follow established provider policy emergency procedures to immediately administer naloxone as indicated and ensure immediate emergency medical attention following administration.
4. When applicable, modify clients' treatment to incorporate medication-assisted treatment (MAT), address safety concerns, limit prescriptions for controlled medications, and coordinate with addiction treatment providers.
5. Encourage via verbal discussion, a written FAQ, and a prescription for the acquisition of naloxone for all clients prescribed opiates, suboxone, or other forms of MAT.
6. Develop a plan to educate and train clients on the availability and use of naloxone.
7. Establish a written policy with accompanying procedures enabling staff to identify persons who need naloxone and to promptly administer naloxone as indicated.
8. Establish a written policy with accompanying procedures regarding the acquisition, storage, monitoring, administration, and safe disposal of used and expired naloxone.
9. Post on-site a copy of the written policy and procedures related to naloxone.

Resources

- Free in-person Narcan administration training is available at Brandywine Counseling and Walgreens Pharmacy.
- Free online training in Narcan (naloxone) administration can be obtained at:
 - www.getnaloxonenow.org.
 - prescribeprevent.org/patient-education/videos.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently released an updated version of the opioid overdose toolkit. The goal of the toolkit is to prevent opioid overdose by educating first responders, physicians, clients, and family and community members. The toolkit is available at store.samhsa.gov/product/Opioid-Overdose-Prevention-Toolkit-Updated-2016/SMA164742.