

Continuing Pharmacy Education

Dispensing Naloxone in Ohio without a Prescription: What Pharmacy Personnel Need to Know

This activity provides 1 contact hour (0.1 CEU) of continuing pharmacy education in jurisprudence (law) for pharmacists and registered pharmacy technicians.

The continued opioid epidemic across the United States has made it more important than ever to destigmatize opioid addiction and make naloxone products readily available to people in need. The following activity focuses on basic information on the dispensing of naloxone products in pharmacies by registered pharmacists or pharmacy interns in the State of Ohio without a prescription pursuant to a physician-authorized protocol.

Pharmacy technicians would also benefit from this activity as they often have first contact with patients in the pharmacy. If the pharmacy does not have a protocol in place, all staff should still be able to provide the person requesting naloxone information on where to obtain it free, without a prescription. Keep in mind, this protocol does not apply to filling a written prescription by a prescriber for a naloxone product. Laws regarding naloxone dispensing/availability are rapidly changing in Ohio, this activity reflects current law at this time.

Example Scenario: You are a pharmacist at a local pharmacy and overhear a conversation between your pharmacy intern and a 17-year-old requesting naloxone for her father, who recently overdosed at home. The family had naloxone on hand, and she was able to administer it until EMS arrived. She tells the intern that she read people can get naloxone at local pharmacies without a prescription, sometimes free with health insurance. She found your specific pharmacy on the Board of Pharmacy's website (www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/StopOverdose). She wants to keep some on hand in case her father relapses. You hear the intern tell her that since she is not the person who has the opioid addiction, and she is under the age of 18, she cannot dispense it to her. Luckily, you were knowledgeable in Ohio law and your pharmacy's physician-established protocol and stepped in to help her get the naloxone she requested. What should you go over with your intern after this scenario?

The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy's website has a page dedicated to naloxone resources: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/naloxone. Here you can find a variety of guidance documents and other resources to assist in the dispensing of naloxone without a prescription.

If a pharmacy does not have a physician-established protocol for dispensing naloxone products without a prescription, or the requester has no insurance to bill the product to and/or cannot afford the cash price, please refer the person requesting the naloxone to the Ohio Department of Health's Project DAWN website (www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/DAWN) for information on where to obtain free naloxone products outside of local pharmacies without a prescription.

Naloxone can also be obtained by mail, at no-cost, through Harm Reduction Ohio by visiting: <https://nextdistro.org/hro>.

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The following documents should be reviewed prior to completing the quiz questions below:

1. Guidance Document: Dispensing of Naloxone by Pharmacists and Pharmacy Interns without a Prescription (www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/naloxonepharmacy)
2. Ohio Revised Code 4729.44 - Dispensing naloxone:
<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-4729.44>
3. Ohio Administrative Code 4729:1-3-04 - Dispensing of naloxone by pharmacists:
<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-4729:1-3-04>
4. Ohio Administrative Code 4729:2-3-04 - Dispensing of naloxone by pharmacy interns:
<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-4729:2-3-04>

To take the quiz, visit: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/naloxonequiz

If your pharmacy has a protocol in place, it is critical that every employee is aware of it and how to handle questions related to it. It is also imperative that your pharmacy keep adequate stock of the naloxone products listed in your protocol, and that training is performed as required by law to existing and new employees [see OAC 4729:1-3-04(K)(2)].

You can be an integral part of helping fight this ongoing public health crisis and save lives!

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