



**STATE OF  
OHIO**  
BOARD OF PHARMACY

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## E-NEWS UPDATE NALOXONE AWARENESS

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### **Campaign Promotes Naloxone in Counties with High Risk for Overdose**

Monday sees the launch of a targeted campaign to raise awareness about the signs of a drug overdose and to urge family members and friends of people who use drugs to obtain the opiate overdose reversal drug naloxone to administer during an overdose while waiting on first-responders to arrive. The campaign is focused on 15 counties that accounted for 80 percent of Ohio's fentanyl-related overdose deaths in 2014: Butler, Clark, Clermont, Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lorain, Lucas, Marion, Montgomery, Ross, Scioto, Stark, Summit and Warren.

Ohio has seen a major increase in overdose deaths involving fentanyl, a synthetic narcotic used to treat severe pain that in its prescription form is estimated to be 30 to 50 times more potent than heroin. Ohio had 503 fentanyl-related overdose deaths in 2014 compared to 84 in 2013. This campaign is a collaboration between the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS).

More information can be found at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/stopoverdoses>, including how to obtain a naloxone kit without a prescription at participating pharmacies, or through Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided with Naloxone) community programs supported by ODH.

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### **Pharmacist Dispensing of Naloxone: Education is Essential**

Naloxone is one of the most effective tools at reversing an opioid overdose. To expand access to this life-saving drug, the Ohio General Assembly adopted legislation to allow pharmacists to dispense this medication without a prescription to an at-risk opioid user or someone who can intervene in the event of an overdose. Unfortunately, the Board has received a number of reports of pharmacists that have either turned away customers despite the fact that their pharmacy notified the Board that they offer this service or that have failed to provide the appropriate training to their patients on use of the medication.

Pharmacists who work at any pharmacy that has submitted notification to the Board that they are dispensing naloxone pursuant to a physician protocol should familiarize themselves with the requirements in rule 4729-5-39 of the Ohio Administrative Code. If you are unsure of whether your pharmacy offers naloxone without a prescription, a full list of participating pharmacies can be accessed here: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/naloxonepharmacy](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/naloxonepharmacy).

Additionally, pharmacists are reminded that patient training should go beyond the provision of written materials and should include a comprehensive review of all the requirements stipulated in rule. Your responsibility for patient education is critical as it could help save a life. For more information on these requirements as well as training materials for pharmacists, please visit: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/naloxone](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/naloxone).