

DATE: XXXXXXX, 2023

TO: [STATE] Community Pharmacy Providers

FROM: [STATE Department of Public Health, Board of Registration in Pharmacy, State Pharmacy Association, or other]

RE: Over the Counter (OTC) Naloxone

This memo outlines information on the availability of naloxone in [STATE], including new over the counter products. It also directs you to resources available for you, your pharmacy, and your patients to facilitate availability and access to naloxone.

What to know– On March 29th, 2023 the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a branded 4-mg intranasal formulation (Emergent Biosolutions) for over the counter (OTC) sale. A generic version of the 4-mg product (Padagis) and a 3-mg intranasal branded formulation of naloxone were both approved in July 2023 (Revive). The approval of OTC intranasal naloxone products are intended to increase the accessibility of naloxone as a key strategy to reducing fatal overdoses in our communities. The shift to OTC sales is also geared toward mitigating the stigma associated with people who use drugs that seek out this product. OTC naloxone is bound for pharmacy shelves this upcoming fall.

Access options–pharmacies and elsewhere: In addition to these new OTC products, people can still access free naloxone through community-based organizations, by prescriptions and standing orders from pharmacists. OTC naloxone will be available to purchase in more locations beyond pharmacy shelves, such as grocery stores, gas stations, convenience stores and other retail locations.

Cost and coverage–The practice of acquiring and carrying naloxone is still stigmatized, and OTC access aims to ease this burden through anonymous purchase. However, concerns have been raised that people who need the product the most will have difficulty accessing the product due to its nearly \$50 retail price, the highest priced OTC product available. To help reduce the financial burden of OTC naloxone, retailers and pharmacies should advertise that healthcare savings or flexible spending accounts can be used to cover the entire cost of OTC naloxone. Some insurance may cover the OTC naloxone products. **State Medicaid will cover the cost of 4mg only? naloxone with \$0 copay under the state's standing order and will cover OTC naloxone.**

Placement of OTC naloxone—Pharmacies and other retailers should maintain anonymous access to naloxone directly on a shelf, without locking it behind a cabinet nor in a container that necessitates contacting an employee to access it. Stocking OTC naloxone behind the counter may help increase awareness, but if this is its exclusive location, access may be limited if people must ask to purchase it from a clerk or pharmacy staff member. Pharmacy businesses that can select where products will be shelved should consider placing OTC naloxone toward the front of stores or cash registers to maximize visibility.

Educational resources about OTC naloxone– The [Department of Public Health] encourages access to resources developed by researchers who have conducted studies of pharmacy naloxone access as part of a study called [Respond to Prevent](#). Educational resources available

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include a pharmacist job-aid, informational videos, and an OTC infographic (tear-off and poster versions) for patients. Printed tear-offs designed for the pharmacy counter or register area are also available for free at the [STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT OR OTHER LOCATION] through December 2023. Please utilize these resources.

Please direct any questions to: **Pharmacy.Admin@xxxxxxxx.gov**