

OPIOID OVERDOSE RESPONSE

Background

This procedure clarifies the response to a possible opioid overdose at District schools. These guidelines apply to District and school staff who have been identified and trained by the District to recognize and respond to signs of an overdose by or from overdose at school sites and during school sanctioned events.

The District recognizes that overdose deaths are a leading cause of unnatural deaths in BC, impacting people from all regions regardless of age, education level, profession, and economic status.

The District believes that harm reduction is an appropriate response in the event of an opioid overdose. As Naloxone (Narcan) has been shown to increase positive outcomes in the event of an opioid overdose and has no negative effects if given in the absence of opioids, Naloxone kits shall be made available in all schools.

Definitions

Naloxone

An antidote to an opioid overdose. Naloxone can restore breathing following an opioid overdose and can be given by injection. Under BC law, anyone may administer naloxone in an emergency situation outside of a hospital setting. This includes staff, students, parents, and volunteers. Naloxone has no effect on a person if they have not taken opioids.

Opioid

A class of drug, such as morphine, heroin and codeine as well as oxycodone, methadone, and fentanyl.

Opioid Overdose

An acute life-threatening condition caused using too much opioid. During an opioid overdose a person's breathing can slow or stop.

Procedures

1. All schools will maintain on-site naloxone in designated spots in each facility. There should be a minimum of two kits in each facility.
2. To treat a suspected opioid overdose in a school setting, a staff member trained in opioid overdose response may administer naloxone to any student or staff suspected of having an opioid-related drug overdose.
3. Staff trained in opioid identification and naloxone administration will call 911 (or designate the calling responsibility) and then may choose to give naloxone and/or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) depending on circumstances and training.

4. Further, the Emergency Health Services Act allows all health care professionals (regulated and non-regulated), first responders, and citizens to administer naloxone in non-hospital settings.
5. For staff safety, staff will not be required to leave their school/site to respond to overdoses occurring off the school site.
6. Procurement of Naloxone shall be done centrally on a purchasing schedule based on the purchase dates of the Naloxone and the expiry date. This is a responsibility of the Safe School Coordinator.
7. Responding to overdoses involves proper use of personal protective equipment, handling syringes, and potential contact with drugs or blood and body fluids. If drugs are on the person or the scene, they also must be handled carefully (gloves are required and located in the naloxone kit). Finally, some individuals may be angry and physically aggressive or violent upon revival via naloxone.

Training

Opioid overdose response training including the administration of naloxone can be provided in person, virtually or through online courses.

In-person training will be arranged by the District. Online training through the "[Toward the Heart](#)" website will be made available to those who would like and/or cannot attend the in-person training.

Recommended training resources:

[Interior Health Youth Harm Reduction Program](#)
[Naloxone: Save Me Steps to Save a Life](#)

Staff should be aware that overdose response, like many other emergency response protocols, may involve health and safety issues.

Approved: February 26, 2024