



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: Jhone M. Ebert 
Doug Lentivech 

SUBJECT: Combating Opioid and Heroin Use and Abuse

DATE: January 6, 2017

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

The purpose of this item is to provide an update to the Board of Regents on the current opioid and heroin epidemic in New York State (NYS). Since the Combat Heroin Campaign was launched by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in September of 2014, the Department has been actively involved in bringing awareness, prevention education, guidance and resources to schools on heroin and opioid use and abuse.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Heroin addiction and prescription opioid abuse are persistent national problems that reach deep into communities across NYS and heavily affect young adults, with cases of children as young as twelve years of age using opioids. Heroin and prescription drug misuse occurs in all social, economic, geographic and cultural groups and is often part of a larger substance abuse problem. Addressing issues such as alcohol and drug use and abuse, which frequently occurs before the age of eighteen, may prevent the progression of abuse to other harmful substances. Addiction can happen to anyone, to any family, and at any time. By working together, we can help to make a difference in combatting this epidemic.

Proposed Handling

This item will come before the Board of Regents for discussion at the January 2017 Meeting.

Background Information

In March of 2014, the Governor created a bipartisan New York State (NYS) Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction to examine the alarming rise in the use of heroin and opioids. By May of 2015, the Governor had developed a Statewide Heroin Task Force to serve as a blueprint to fight the epidemic.

Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2015 added a new section 922 to the Education Law, permitting school districts, BOCES, charter schools, and non-public elementary and/or secondary schools to provide and maintain opioid antagonists on site in each instructional building to ensure emergency access for any student or school personnel. Schools choosing to participate in the training programs developed jointly by the NYS Department of Health and the NYS Education Department (NYSED) may receive free naloxone (an opioid antagonist). Public Health Law §3309 permits employees, who volunteer to be trained, to administer an opioid antagonist in the event of an emergency. Commissioner's regulations §136.8 outline the requirements for schools to participate in this program.

Additionally, Education Law §6527 and 6909 and Commissioner's regulations §64.7 authorize registered professional nurses (RNs) to administer opioid-related overdose treatment pursuant to a non-patient specific order and protocol prescribed by a licensed physician or a certified nurse practitioner. This places administration of non-patient specific naloxone within the scope and practice of the registered professional nurse.

In an effort to address this growing epidemic, NYSED, the NYS Department Of Health (DOH) and the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) engaged in a collaboration that started with all three Commissioners jointly signing a letter noting a commitment to collaboratively promoting the NYS Combat Heroin Campaign. As part of this coordinated State effort, all three State Agencies, with assistance from NYSED's Statewide School Health Center and the NYS Harm Reduction Coalition, actively began developing statewide communications, resources, guidance and a training curriculum for volunteer school personnel titled, "*Opioid Overdose Training for School Personnel: Recognizing a Life-Threatening Opioid Overdose and Using an Opioid Antagonist*".

In June of 2014, NYS Legislation mandated that instruction about Heroin and Opioids be included within the Health Education drug and alcohol curricula. This law also offered provisions for guidance and resource support to assist teachers in addressing functional knowledge content and related skills aligned with the NYS Learning Standards for Health Education for students. As a result, the *Health Education Standards Modernization Supplemental Guidance Document: Instructional Resource Packet for Heroin and Opioids* was developed.

More recently, Education Law §922 , as added by Section 4 of Part V of Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2015, was amended by Chapter 68 of the Laws of 2016 to include New York State public libraries as eligible participants in the opioid overdose prevention programs. Education Law §6509-d provides protection from liability of professional misconduct to a person who is licensed to practice a profession under Title Eight of the Education Law (if the person would otherwise be prohibited from prescribing/administering drugs and the person administers an opioid antagonist in an emergency).

Communication to Schools

Numerous memos have been issued by NYSED to schools, over the past two years informing schools of applicable laws and regulations related to opioid overdose prevention; resources, toolkits and trainings; obtaining free naloxone; and modernizing health education in curricula.

On April 6th, 2016, Commissioner Elia spoke at the NYSDOH's Annual Statewide Overdose Provider Meeting, along with other State Agency Commissioners, and she dedicated the Department's support in combating this epidemic. A second letter signed by all three Agency Commissioners was issued in April 2016 announcing the Opioid Abuse Kitchen Table Toolkit developed by OASAS in collaboration with NYSDOH, NYSED and numerous stakeholders. The Toolkit was developed to guide parents, teachers, counselors and community members in initiating conversations about heroin and opioid abuse.

NYSED and the New York State Center for School Health (NYSCSH) conducted an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program Survey, which found that there is a need for the identification of available resources. Survey information was shared with the NYSDOH and OASAS. Additionally, SED's Office of Student Support Services and the NYSCSH participated in two NYSDOH Opioid Overdose Training Programs, and provided numerous presentations to schools and local health departments on the implementation of overdose programs, and the modernization of health education curricula.

In October of 2016, NYSED and the NYSCSH provided four regional Professional School Health Seminars for school nurses, district medical directors, school health educators and health coordinators across the State. In the seminars, resources from the National Institute of Drug Abuse, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA), NYSDOH, and OASAS were reviewed, as well as the NYSCSH Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit used to educate students, parents, staff and the school community about prescription drug abuse and prevention. These by national and state partners along with key stakeholders are aimed at ensuring that school professionals receive accurate, evidence-based resources to effectively support students in achieving both optimum health and academic success.

Strength of Partnerships in Purposeful Collaborative Planning: Resulting in Positive Outcomes

School personnel continue to be important partners, and play a critical role, in educating students about substance abuse, addiction and overdose prevention. Utilizing evidence-based curricula, following district procedures for referral, and recognizing behaviors or symptoms which indicate when a student is at-risk of overdosing, are some of the life-saving steps to reducing overdoses in the school community. Partnering with the NYSDOH and OASAS has been invaluable in providing expertise and free resources to schools.

The SED has participated in the NYSDOH's Prevention Agenda 2013-2018 to improve the overall health of New Yorkers, and reduce health disparities found among certain groups of our population based on race, ethnicity, disability, or socioeconomic status.

The OASAS NYS Policy Academy on Preventing Mental and Substance Use Disorders in Youth is supported by SAMHSA, and NYSED is an active participant in this initiative on Preventing Mental and Substance Use Disorders in Youth.

Panel Presentation on Strategies to Prevent and Improve Educational Outcomes for Youth

NYSED has invited the following professionals to participate in a panel presentation on State and local perspectives regarding the opioid and heroin epidemic. The presenters are as follows:

- Sharon Stancliff MD, Medical Director Harm Reduction Coalition
- Erin Graupman, District Coordinator Health Services, Rochester City School District
- Ann Rhodes, Prevention Provider, Hamilton, Fulton, Montgomery (HFM) Prevention Council
- John Sumpter, SUNY College Student

Presenters will discuss the following:

- ✓ Partnerships that currently exist among State agencies and other key stakeholders ensuring a coordinated and sustainable infrastructure continues across State Agencies and Local Education Agencies;
- ✓ Core risk and protective factors with students and families through the dissemination of current scientific research-based information regarding prevention of substance abuse;
- ✓ Data gathered from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and the School Health Profile Survey, among

other surveys, provide valid and reliable data to drive decisions for health education programs;

- ✓ Establish mechanisms that help identify young people who use drugs and refer them to resources in local communities;
- ✓ Strengthening health education so that students learn about the dangers of opioid use and other drugs; and
- ✓ Youth experiences with service delivery systems and recommendations on how these systems could effectively address the needs of youth and strengthen drug prevention efforts.

Next Steps on a Multi-Prong Approach to Addressing the Heroin and Opioid Epidemic

1. Work with OASAS and other State agencies to develop an additional supplemental guide to the *Health Education Standards Modernization Supplemental Guidance Document: Instructional Resource Packet for Heroin and Opioids* that includes information about Evidence-Based Programs and Practices related to comprehensive substance abuse prevention strategies.
2. Engage in statewide anti-stigma campaigns focused on breaking down stereotypes about people who use drugs and alcohol to provide the necessary and appropriate supports to youth struggling with addiction.
3. Collaborate with NYSEDs Offices of Early Learning, Curriculum and Instruction, and Higher Education to identify gaps related to opioid and heroin prevention education and increase the Department's capacity to provide technical assistance on health education.
4. Consider recommending legislative changes to Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2015 and to §922 of Education Law. Currently, schools/school districts are permitted to provide and maintain opioid antagonists on site in each instructional facility to ensure emergency access for any student or school personnel. Recommended changes would state that opioid antagonists can be administered to anyone on school property and at any school event.

Related Regents Item(s)

N/A

Attachment



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November 29, 2016

To: BOCES District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools
Principals of Public and Nonpublic Schools
Charter School Leaders

From: Renée L. Rider 

Subject: Information for Schools Regarding Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs

As you may recall, in an effort to combat the continuing rise in opioid-related deaths in New York State, laws were enacted in summer of 2015 allowing schools to provide and maintain opioid antagonists (naloxone) on-site in each instructional school facility to ensure ready and appropriate access for use during emergencies to any student or staff. In support, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) developed a training program for school personnel to assist schools in implementing an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program.¹ Additional information, guidance and resource materials to assist schools can be located at the Statewide Center for School Health Services at: <http://www.schoolhealthservicesny.com/HeroinandOpioidToolkitResources>.

There are various options for implementing an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program, including the availability of two options where schools can receive **free naloxone**:

- Register with the NYSDOH to operate a NYSDOH Registered Opioid Overdose Prevention Program; or
- Participate in a NYSDOH Registered Opioid Overdose Prevention Program operated by another organization.

Prior to participation in an Opioid Overdose Prevention Program and providing an opioid antagonist in a school, district boards of education and school governing bodies should develop policies consistent with the laws and regulations of New York.

Questions should be directed to the Office of Student Support Services at 518-486-6090, or StudentSupportServices@nysed.gov.

As always, thank you for your continued dedication to keeping our children safe.

¹ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/documents/NewLawOpioidOverdosePreventMemo.pdf>