

Increase **Naloxone** Prescribing in Your Health System

Naloxone is a life-saving medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, whether from prescription or illicit opioids including heroin and fentanyl.¹

It is available in three forms: nasal spray, injection, and auto-injection. When sprayed into the nose or injected into the muscle, it quickly reverses the harmful effects of opioids during an overdose.² However, only 1 naloxone prescription is dispensed for every 70 high-dose opioid prescriptions.¹



Did you know?

Far too little naloxone is being dispensed in the United States.¹

- In 2018, rural counties had the lowest naloxone dispensing rates and were nearly 3 times more likely to be low-dispensing counties compared to metropolitan counties.
- Primary care clinicians wrote only 1.5 naloxone prescriptions per 100 high-dose opioid prescriptions—a marker for opioid overdose risk.
- Over half of naloxone prescriptions required a copay.

As a healthcare executive, you play a critical role in supporting naloxone and opioid use disorder training and education for clinicians.³



Here are some tips for increasing naloxone prescribing in your health system for patients at risk for opioid overdose:³

1. Support education for healthcare clinicians and pharmacists related to the benefits of naloxone, when to prescribe it, and how to talk to patients and families about naloxone in a non-judgmental manner.

Learn more: <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma18-4742.pdf>

2. Establish practice-wide quality improvement measures to assess electronic health record data and track the percentage of patients on long-term opioid therapy who were counseled on the purpose and use of naloxone, and either prescribed or referred to obtain naloxone.³

Learn more: <https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/healthcare-admins/qi-cc.html>

3. Build in electronic health records clinical reminders at the point of care to increase naloxone prescribing. Consider proactive approaches such as integrating clinical decision support tools into your electronic health records system.



For more information and resources on naloxone, visit [cdc.gov/opioids/naloxone](https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/naloxone), and for drug overdose prevention, visit [cdc.gov/drugoverdose](https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose).

¹<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/naloxone/index.html>

²<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/having-naloxone-hand-can-save-life-during-opioid-overdose>

³<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/919117>