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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 19, 2014

TO: Members of the Delaware State House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell, Chairperson  
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: S.B. 219 (Opioid Overdose Intervention)

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed S.B. 219 which would require the Department of Health & Social Services to promote the safe use of Naloxone through education and training programs. The legislation also contemplates DHSS establishment of a community-based Naloxone program funded through grant money. At a minimum, individuals soliciting Naloxone from the program would be required to complete a training and education program.

As background, Naloxone is a drug used to counter the effects of an opioid overdose, including heroin and morphine-related overdoses. Consistent with the attached articles, Naloxone is available as a nasal spray and an autoinjector device. A prescription can be written for a person with the addiction and purchased by friends and family to have available in the event of an overdose. However, training in its use is important since "people who are administered Naloxone can wake up violent and/or go into respiratory failure" (lines 20-21).

SCPD endorses the proposed legislation because it reasonably addresses the growing problem of opioid addiction and concomitant overdoses.

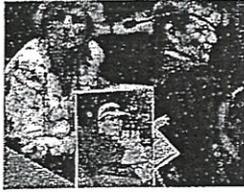
Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position or observations on this important legislation.

cc: Delaware State Senate  
Mr. Brian Hartman  
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens  
Developmental Disabilities Council

# Bill would permit possession of heroin overdose drug

Jon Offredo, The News Journal 9:38 p.m. EDT May 14, 2014

*Bill would get counter drug in the hands of more people likely to come across overdoses*



(Photo: GARY EMEIGH/THE NEWS JOURNAL)

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The Delaware Senate will consider a bill that makes a drug available without a prescription that supporters argue will save the life of someone overdosing on heroin or other opioids.

The legislation, which cleared a Senate committee Wednesday, allows Delaware's Department of Health and Social Services to distribute Naloxone without a prescription and at little or no cost to anyone who completes a training program. Officials say the legislation is a tool to combat the growing heroin and opioid epidemic facing the state.

"This legislation will save lives," said the bill's sponsor Sen. Bethany Hall-Long, D-Middletown.

Delaware law currently allows friends and family members to purchase the drug when a prescription is written for a person with the addiction. One brand of the drug, Narcan, is available as a nasal spray. In April, the Food and Drug Administration approved an autoinjector-like device for administration of the drug, but the cost of it is unknown.

It could have saved David Humes's son, Greg, who died of an overdose in 2012. Humes remembers police telling him that his son could have survived if the state had a 911 Good Samaritan or Narcan law.

He lives those words every day of his life, he told the Senate Health and Social Services Committee on Wednesday. Gov. Jack Markell signed the Samaritan law last year.

"Time matters. Give other parents a life-saving tool that I didn't have," he said.

It's not clear how the community-based training program would work, but officials from DHSS are looking at best practices across the nation, said Debbie Gottschalk, the department's chief policy adviser.

The idea is to get the drug in the hands of more people who are likely to come across overdoses, whether they are community group members, friends or family members, Gottschalk said. Training is needed to help people understand how to administer the medicine, she added.

For Diann Jones, of Middletown, the legislation offers peace of mind.

Her daughter, 22, has been in and out of treatment for heroin and opioid addiction in the past two years. It's a constant struggle to fight the disease, but the legislation would allow her to help immediately, even if her daughter didn't seek a prescription, she said.

They recently took a drive to North Carolina, but she would have been powerless if the worst had happened.

"I have no idea what I would have done," she said.

Emergency Medical Service units in Delaware have administered Naloxone for several years now and 900 unresponsive people were given the drug in 2013. Three hundred were revived, but it is unknown how many had overdosed on opioids.

A pilot project started in March that allows Basic Life Support units to carry the drug in high heroin use areas has already seen results. Units have administered it five times, reviving three people. The drug is administered before police officers arrive at the scene in the vast majority of instances where emergency responders use it.

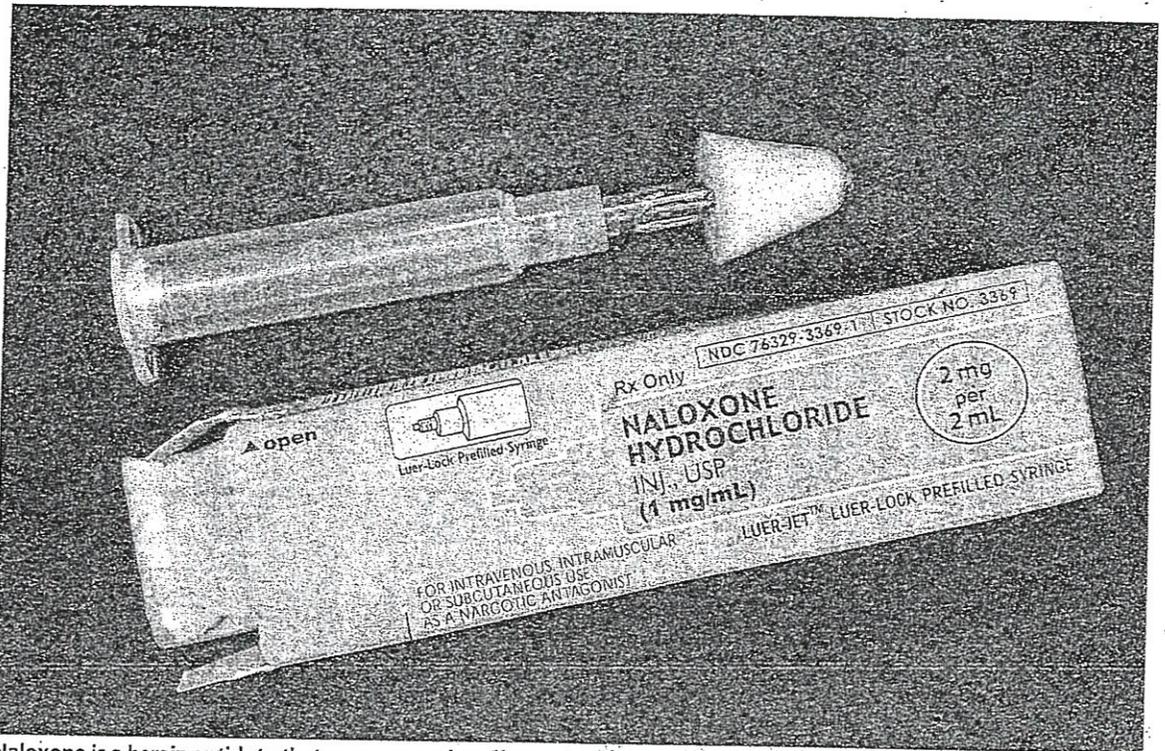
The legislation provides a front-line defense to a heroin and opioid epidemic, said Joe Connor, president of Addictions Coalition Delaware. Treatment for addiction comes in many forms: abstinence, medicine, education.

"This is kind of the 911 of treatment," he said. "It brings someone back from an overdose and gives them another opportunity to get treatment."

<http://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/local/2014/05/14/bill-permit-possession-heroin-overdose-dr...> 5/19/2014

6-4-19  
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# Del. Senate eases way for usage of OD drug



Naloxone is a heroin antidote that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. GETTY IMAGES

## After training, people could buy Naloxone at low rate

By Jon Offredo The News Journal

**S**enate lawmakers unanimously passed legislation Tuesday that could make overdose-reversing medication available without a prescription and at a low rate.

The bill, now heading to the House, allows Delaware's Department of Health and Social Services to establish a training program that would allow individuals to obtain Naloxone upon completion, said Sen. Bethany Hall-Long, a Middletown Democrat and the bill's sponsor.

How the training operates and the regulations allowing the distribution still is being worked out, but officials are studying best practices across the nation, she added.

A wider availability of Naloxone will save lives, Hall-Long said.

"I think all of us know that heroin and opiate addiction crosses economic classes," Hall-Long said. "It is prevalent."

Current state law allows friends and family members to purchase the medication when a prescription is written for the person struggling with addiction. But few, if any, doctors have prescribed the medication and pharmacies generally don't carry it, said David Mangler, director of the state's Division of Professional Regulation. Medical professionals just didn't know they could prescribe it under current law, he added.

The division is preparing to send out advisories to doctors and pharmacies explaining how the medication is used, administered and how to prescribe it, Mangler said.

Naloxone comes in several forms, including Narcan, a nasal spray. It would cost pharmacies roughly \$46 to order the medication, but the cost to patients is unknown and many insurance companies don't cover its purchase, Mangler said.

Contact Jon Offredo at (302) 678-4271 or at [joffredo@delawareonline.com](mailto:joffredo@delawareonline.com) or on Twitter @jonoffredo.

# 'Narcant' vote is a vote against death

Our View 7:40 p.m. EDT June 4, 2014



(Photo: Spencer Platt)

Here is an appreciative nod to the Delaware Senate. The legislative body unanimously approved a medication that could save the lives of heroin addicts.

It is now up to the Delaware House to follow suit and for the governor to sign the bill into law.

Naloxone is an overdose-reversal medication. The bill allows it to be available with a prescription. Sen. Bethany Hall-Long, the prime sponsor of the bill, said a wider availability of Naloxone would save lives.

She is right.

**EDITORIAL:** [A closed bridge and an inconvenient commute \(/story/opinion/editorials/2014/06/03/closed-bridge-inconvenient-commute/9927461/\)](#)

**EDITORIAL:** [New Jersey's state's rights: Anything for a jackpot \(/story/opinion/editorials/2014/06/04/new-jerseys-state-rights-anything-jackpot/9981505/\)](#)

The medicine comes in a variety of forms. It can be used to reverse the affects of a heroin overdose. The medicine is known as "narcant" and it takes seconds to administer. Emergency officials and family members, for example, could quickly administer the medicine to someone who overdoses on heroin and help the victim revive.

The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services will be required to start training programs. It is hoped publicity attached to the bill let medical professionals know the medicine already is available through prescriptions. The bill will carry that to the next step.

Heroin is hitting Delawareans across all cultures, races and economic levels. The time for smart thinking about this scourge is now. Too many people are dying from overdoses or destroying their lives.

Passage of the bill does not get it into the hands of those who need it. However, Wednesday's action is a good start.

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