



101 HOLIDAY INN DRIVE
PO BOX 29045
CAMBRIDGE, ON N3C 0A0
866.723.9082

Naloxone Kits and the Personal Support Worker

What is a Naloxone?

Answer: Naloxone Background: Naloxone is a medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and allow time for medical help to arrive. Since June 2016, naloxone has been available for free through pharmacies, community organizations and provincial correctional facilities. This was in response to the opioid crisis, and in particular, the increase in overdose deaths.

Fentanyl has been linked to many of these overdose deaths. Fentanyl is a highly addictive opioid that is prescribed as a skin patch (or as confectionary, tablets, nasal spray, Buccal film and illegal powders). It is 100 times more powerful than morphine and used to treat severe pain. Most street fentanyl in Canada is produced illegally as a powder. It is increasingly found in street drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, and used to make tablets that look like prescription medications. Many overdoses have occurred because people did not know that what they were taking was contaminated with fentanyl.

Source: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

What form of Naloxone kit can a PSW use?

Answer: A PSW may only use a Naloxone kit nasal spray or eye drops

Does using a Naloxone Nasal Spray or eye drops violate the PSW scope of practice?

Answer: No, even though the PSW are prohibited from inserting anything under the skin or in the body, the use of a Naloxone spray or eye drops is time sensitive and as a result the OPSWA asserts that the use of the Naloxone nasal spray or eye drops does not violate the scope of practice for a PSW. The OPSWA strongly recommends all PSWs to be trained on the administration of Naloxone nasal spray or eye drops.



101 HOLIDAY INN DRIVE
PO BOX 29045
CAMBRIDGE, ON N3C 0A0
866.723.9082

Can a PSW legally use a Naloxone Nasal Spray kit or eye drops?

Answer: Yes, in the event that a PSW, while on duty, is present if a person is suffering from an opioid overdose.

How can I, a PSW, get the Naloxone Nasal Spray Kit?

Answer: Contact the Ministry of Health and Pharmacies In Ontario

Naloxone kits are made available through the Ministry of Health and Pharmacies to anyone who is:

- At risk of an opioid addiction
- A family member, friend, or other person able to help someone at risk of an opioid overdose
- A client of a needle syringe/exchange program or hepatitis C program
- Newly released from a correctional facility.

Naloxone Nasal Spray & Eye Drop PSW Policy

The administration of nasal sprays or eye drops by a PSW while on duty is prohibited by the PSWS scope of practice, unless specifically delegated. There are cases however, where strictly adhering to this scope may place an individual in danger.

The OPSWA believes that the administration of the Naloxone nasal spray or eye drops is a case where an exemption to the scope of practice be made to accommodate actions that protect the lives of Ontarians and asserts the following:



101 HOLIDAY INN DRIVE
PO BOX 29045
CAMBRIDGE, ON N3C 0A0
866.723.9082

In the event that a PSW is present when a person (in their immediate presence)

1. suffers an opioid overdose, the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association endorses the PSW present to administer a naloxone nasal spray kit or eye drops to the affected person. Once the PSW has administered the naloxone kit the PSW must call paramedics immediately. The PSW is to wait with the patient until they are taken by paramedics.

The OPSWA forbids any PSW from using a Naloxone injectable kit while on duty. If no nasal spray is available, the PSW is call paramedics and wait with patient until arrival of emergency services

1 The term “immediate presence” describes a scenario where the PSW are their patient are in close enough proximity to satisfy the requisite that the administration of the Naloxone medication does not negatively impact the health and safety of their patient.