

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION REGARDING NALOXONE (NARCAN) ADMINISTRATION POLICY IN PGSD SCHOOLS

Parents, Faculty, Staff and PGSD Students,

A new policy to ensure the health and safety of the PGSD community was adopted by the PGSD School Board on June 14, 2016. The safe and effective management of opioid pain reliever (OPR)–related overdose in schools is now incorporated into the PGSD school emergency preparedness and response plan. To view the policy, click [here](#).

Deaths from prescription painkillers (opioid or narcotic pain relievers) have reached epidemic levels in the past decade according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2014a).

Naloxone, an opioid overdose antidote, can prevent overdose deaths by reversing life threatening respiratory depression. When administered quickly and effectively, Naloxone has the potential to immediately restore breathing to a victim experiencing an opioid overdose (Hardesty, 2014).

Naloxone saves lives and can be the first step towards OPR abuse recovery. It provides an opportunity for families to have a second chance with their loved ones by getting them into an appropriate treatment regimen (Lagoy, 2014). Ensuring ready access to Naloxone is one of the SAMHSA’s five strategic approaches to prevent overdose deaths (SAMHSA, 2013). More information can be found [here](#) at this link to the SAMHSA website.

Naloxone will be available to treat opioid drug overdoses in all Pottsgrove public schools.

The symptoms of opioid drug overdose are:

1. A history of current narcotic or opioid use or fentanyl patches on skin or needle(s) in the body
2. Unresponsive or unconscious individuals.
3. Not breathing or slow/shallow respirations.
4. Snoring or gurgling sounds (death rattle signifies near death)
5. Blue lips and/or nail beds
6. Pinpoint pupils
7. Pale, clammy skin
8. Slow heart beat or pulse

A suspected opioid overdose is a life-threatening emergency. If you suspect an overdose, immediately activate the school crisis response team. The school nurse and other trained personnel will respond immediately.

The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act - Drug Overdose Response Immunity, (Act of Sep. 30, 2014, P.L. 2487, No. 139) provides protection from criminal prosecution and civil liability for persons who report overdoses or administer Naloxone in overdose emergencies. See the specific details in Act 139 at this [site](#).

This policy was a collaborative effort between the PGSD certified school nurses, school physician, central office administration and the school board in alignment with Pennsylvania laws and recommendations. Utilizing our Student Assistance Teams and Drug Task Force, we remain committed to the health and safety of our PGSD community.

REFERENCES:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014a). *Vital signs: Prescription painkiller overdoses in the US*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/opioid-prescribing/>

Hardesty, C. (2014). Five things to know about opioid overdose. *Office of Drug Control Policy*. Retrieved from <http://whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/02/10/5-things-know-about-opioid-overdoses>

Lagoy, A. (2014). Heroin and naloxone. *American Journal of Nursing*, 114(10), 12.doi: 10.1097/01.NAJ.0000454829.51619.02

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2014, September 4). *The NSDUH report: Substance use and mental health estimates from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Overview of findings*. Rockville, MD: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-SR200-RecoveryMonth-2014/NSDUH-SR200-RecoveryMonth-2014.htm>