



Provider Notice

April 29, 2024

Naloxone Utilization

The Opioid Crisis

In the United States, drug overdose claims the lives of tens of thousands of people each year. Within Illinois, in 2021, there were 3,013 fatalities due to opioid overdose (IDPH, 2021 Data). This represents a 2.3% increase from 2020 and a 35.8% increase from 2019. In Chicago alone, there were more than 1,400 fatal opioid overdoses in 2021. Non-Hispanic Blacks are disproportionately affected by opioid overdose and deaths. CountyCare, along with providers, pharmacists, and other health care professionals can work together to increase awareness and education, increase monitoring, and increase access & utilization of Narcan.

Why Naloxone?

Naloxone or Narcan (brand) can help reduce opioid overdose deaths and when administered timely, usually within minutes of the first signs of an opioid overdose, can counter the overdose effects. Naloxone is available in various formulations, including naloxone injection, oral tablets, and nasal sprays. In March of 2023, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first over the counter (OTC) version of naloxone. The OTC version is available as a 4mg/.0.1ml intranasal spray.

Who Should Receive Naloxone?

- Patients prescribed opioids who:
 - Are receiving opioids at a dosage of 50 morphine milligram equivalents (MME)/day or greater.
 - Have respiratory conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or obstructive sleep apnea (regardless of opioid dose)
 - Are concurrently taking prescribed or illicit benzodiazepines (regardless of opioid dose)
 - Have nonopioid substance use disorder, report excessive alcohol use, or have a mental health disorder (regardless of opioid dose)
- Patients at high-risk for experiencing or responding to an opioid overdose, including those who:
 - Have experienced a previous opioid overdose.
 - Are using heroin, illicit synthetic opioids or misusing prescription opioids.
 - Are using other illicit drugs such as stimulants, including methamphetamine and cocaine, which potentially could be contaminated with illicit synthetic opioids such as fentanyl.

Contact Us:

CountyCare Provider Services are here to help, you can contact us at 312-864-8200, option 6. You can also use our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to verify eligibility. The Provider Services Representatives can assist you with eligibility and claim status. They can also connect you with your assigned PR Representative. Thank you for working with us to ensure that CountyCare members receive quality care at the right time and in the right setting. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact your assigned Provider Relations Representative or if you do not know your assigned Representative, please contact: CountyCareProviderServices@cookcountyhhs.org.