

September 17, 2026

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
premier@ontario.ca

The Honourable Sylvia Jones
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
Government of Ontario
sylvia.jones@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Jones:

Re: Endorsement of Bill 121, Save a Life Act (Naloxone Kit Registration and Public Access), 2026

On behalf of the Lakelands Public Health (LPH) Board of Health, we are writing to formally communicate our endorsement of [Bill 121, Save a Life Act](#), being proposed by Dr. Robyn Lennox, MPP Hamilton Centre.

Naloxone is a medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid poisoning or overdose, providing critical time for emergency medical services to arrive. It is safe and easy to administer and does not have any effect on a person who is not experiencing an opioid drug poisoning. The Save a Life Act proposes to make naloxone equally accessible and available to save lives as Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). The Act would locate naloxone in community centres and other designated public spaces where AEDs are currently housed.

Evidence shows that the availability of naloxone is a significant contributor to the recent decline in mortality from opioid overdose in Canada. Further, provinces with higher distribution experienced substantial mortality declines, while those with lower distribution experienced less changes. Ontario has experienced a 15% decline in opioid poisoning deaths since naloxone became publicly available in 2016.

Naloxone is currently available to eligible individuals free of charge through health units, community-based organizations and participating pharmacies. An online tool is available to help Ontarians locate where they can get a naloxone kit in their community. However, changes to the Ontario Naloxone Program for Pharmacies (ONPP) have resulted in fewer pharmacies staying in the program. Further, insurance requirements present a barrier to agencies becoming community distribution partners resulting in fewer locations where naloxone could

be available. Access is also limited by office hours, lack of transportation, and only partial coverage by outreach. As an illustration, fewer nasal and intramuscular naloxone kits were distributed through Lakelands Public Health partners and offices in Q1 of 2026 (952) than in Q1 of 2025 (1,355), reflecting funding constraints and staffing challenges among major distribution partners, and the closure of the Peterborough Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) site.

The need for naloxone remains significant across the region, particularly among populations experiencing barriers to healthcare access, including people who use drugs, individuals living in rural communities, and those experiencing homelessness. However, the access to naloxone in many Lakelands communities remains limited. Expanding public access to naloxone by making kits available in locations where AEDs are already installed would help address current service gaps and improve timely access to this life-saving medication during an emergency when seconds count. As other overdose response mechanisms are dismantled, naloxone remains one of the most effective tools to deal with the toxic drug crisis in real-time in communities.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Deputy Mayor Ron Black
Chair, Board of Health

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cc: Dr. Robin Lennox, MPP, Hamilton Centre
Local MPPs
Ontario Boards of Health
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA)