

Pharmacists Expanding Healthcare Access

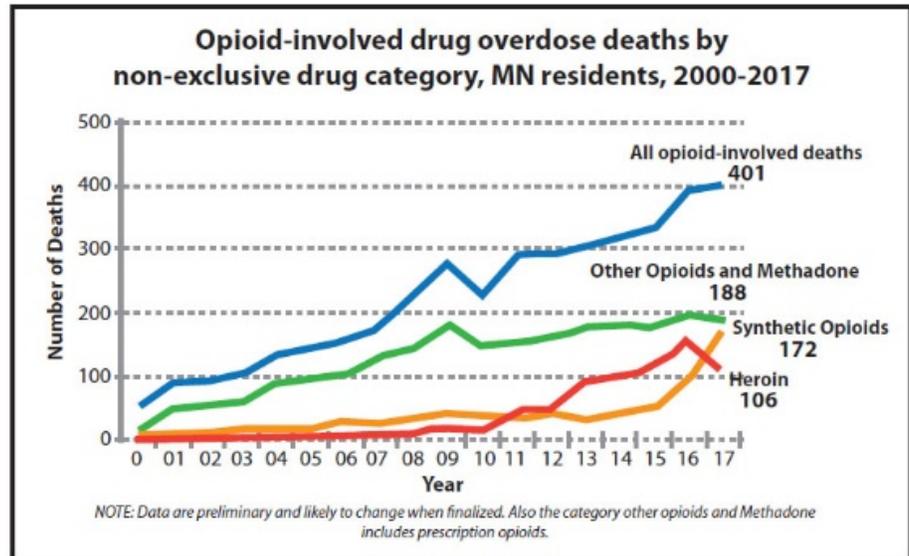
Naloxone – an Opioid Antagonist

Increased access to naloxone can save lives.

Opioid addiction has reached epidemic proportions in the United States. Expansion of naloxone access programs are necessary to reduce health care costs and improve health outcomes for this epidemic.

Opioids have **killed more than 2,700 Minnesotans** in the last 15 years. More than 80% of these deaths involved prescription drugs, and nearly 60% have occurred in the past 5 years. There were 401 deaths in 2017. Deaths from prescription opioids have been stable the last 5 years. Deaths from heroin overdose decreased 29% in 2017, while deaths from synthetic opioids such as fentanyl increased 74%. [1] **Hennepin County alone saw a record 162 opioid-related deaths in 2016.** [2]

The total societal cost of prescription opioid abuse in the U.S. was estimated at \$55.7 billion in 2007. It is estimated that the yearly cost of opioid abuse in Minnesota is \$375,689,480, equating \$69 per Minnesota resident from 2010- 2011. [3] The chart below shows the continuous rise in opioid related deaths statewide in Minnesota from 2000-2017. [4]



For More Information

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On behalf of Minnesota

Pharmacists

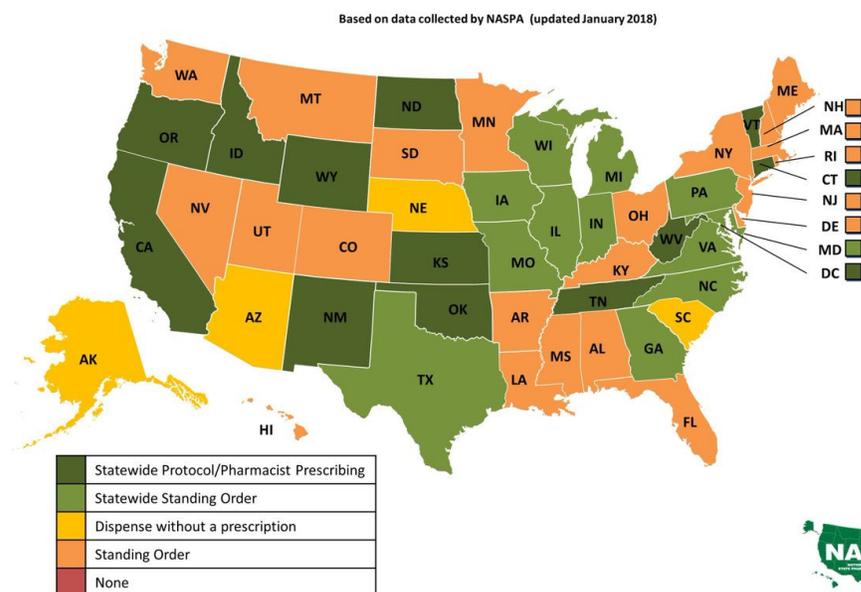
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PHARMACISTS IN OTHER STATES

Currently, the ability of pharmacists to prescribe naloxone varies across the country. Ten states have a statewide protocol or pharmacists prescribing ability for naloxone. Twelve states have a statewide standing order for naloxone, while five states allow for naloxone to be dispensed without a prescription. The figure below shows the variation between states with regard to naloxone access in community pharmacies. [5]

Naloxone Access in Community Pharmacies



“The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) encourages Minnesotans to have naloxone on hand for themselves, family members, or anyone else at risk of an overdose.”

**Pharmacists,
and naloxone,
part of the
solution.**

In 2013, New Mexico became the first state to allow pharmacists to prescribe Naloxone Rescue Kits (NRKs) to patients at risk of opioid overdose without a physician issued prescription. The most common reason for NRK prescription was a patient, family or friend request (56.4%). This data suggests that patients or family of at-risk patients might feel more comfortable requesting NRKs from pharmacists, thus increasing the direct access to NRKs for at-risk patients. About 43% of the NRKs were dispensed based on the pharmacist’s identifying patients at risk for an overdose. This supports the idea **that pharmacists play an important role in reducing overdose deaths and educating the community on opioid abuse and naloxone use.** [6]

[1] Prescription Drug Abuse is the Fastest Growing Drug Problem in the United States and in Minnesota. (2017). Retrieved from doseofreality.mn.gov.
 [2] Walsh, P. (2018, January 25). Opioid-related deaths set another record in Hennepin County in 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.startribune.com/opioid-related-deaths-set-yet-another-in-hennepin-county-in-2017/470954523/>.