

Attention: Mayor & Council or Board of Directors, and CAO

As the toxic drug crisis persists, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) continues to work urgently to expand access to naloxone, which reverses the effects of opioid poisoning. Naloxone is available in two formulations: intramuscular (injectable) and intranasal (nasal). Nasal and injectable naloxone are both effective at reversing opioid poisoning. Nasal naloxone may be a preferred choice in some workplace settings given its ease of use.

The Ministry is encouraging publicly funded organizations to make naloxone available and to equip staff with the training to recognize and respond to suspected drug poisoning. To this end, the Ministry is implementing a **one-time** no-cost initiative to distribute nasal naloxone kits to publicly funded organizations where a toxic drug event may occur.

To receive the no-cost nasal naloxone kits, participating organizations will submit an [order and agreement form](#) confirming their commitment to implement naloxone and meet participation requirements. Needs assessment guidance is provided for consideration as appropriate. Most organizations may order up to 10 kits initially while some organizations that routinely use naloxone may order quantities beyond the 10 that they expect to use by the expiry date of February 2026. Participating organizations will be invited to complete an evaluation survey.

As this is a one-time initiative, participating organizations will need to pursue regular avenues for purchasing naloxone in the future.

We invite you to share this opportunity with relevant departments (such as fire services, by-law units, community centers and recreational centers) in your organization. The details are outlined in the attached invitation to participate. For more information, please contact naloxonesupplies@gov.bc.ca

Sincerely,

Evan Howatson

Executive Director

Overdose Emergency Response

Substance Use Policy Division

Ministry of Health



April 2, 2025

Attention: Mayor & Council or Board of Directors, and CAO

As the toxic drug crisis persists, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) continues to work urgently to expand access to naloxone, which reverses the effects of opioid poisoning. Naloxone is available in two formulations: intramuscular (injectable) and intranasal (nasal). Nasal and injectable naloxone are both effective at reversing opioid poisoning. Nasal naloxone may be a preferred choice in some workplace settings given its ease of use.

The Ministry is encouraging publicly funded organizations to make naloxone available and to equip staff with the training to recognize and respond to suspected drug poisoning. Having naloxone available in the workplace may also create opportunities to foster education and conversations about drug use, while promoting safety, protecting community members and encouraging proactive awareness.

To this end, the Ministry is implementing a **one-time** no-cost initiative to distribute nasal naloxone kits to publicly funded organizations where a toxic drug event may occur. The kits are intended for use by staff in the course of their work duties.

To receive the no-cost nasal naloxone kits, participating organizations will submit an order and agreement form confirming their commitment to implement naloxone and meet participation requirements. Needs assessment guidance is provided for consideration as appropriate. Most organizations may order up to 10 kits initially while some organizations that routinely use naloxone may order quantities beyond the 10 that they expect to use by the expiry date of February 2026. Participating organizations will be invited to complete an evaluation survey.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evan Howatson".

Evan Howatson
Executive Director

Invitation to participate in the Workplace Nasal Naloxone Pilot Initiative

We invite your organization to access no-cost nasal naloxone kits through this initiative. To do so, you will need to:

- review the needs assessment guidance (page 3) and complete the **Naloxone Needs Assessment Decision-Making Template** (page 4) to determine whether your workplace needs naloxone, if procuring naloxone for the first time
- commit to naloxone implementation steps including a free online course for staff expected to administer naloxone (such as occupational first aid attendants)
- commit to submitting a report when a kit is used and participating in an evaluation survey at the conclusion of the pilot

Organizations may order up to 10 kits per location or site (as applicable) while those that routinely use naloxone may order quantities they expect to use by February 2026 (expiry date). Allocation will depend on availability.

As this is a **one-time initiative**, participating organizations will need to pursue regular avenues for purchasing naloxone in the future.

Submit your order through this [order and agreement form](#). For more information, please contact naloxonesupplies@gov.bc.ca.

NALOXONE NEEDS ASSESSMENT DECISION-MAKING

Organizational Drug Poisoning Needs Assessment Considerations

The decision as to whether your organization should obtain naloxone should be based on the likelihood that staff will encounter an individual who is at risk of an opioid poisoning, AND the potential consequence of not having naloxone available should an opioid poisoning occur.

Likelihood of encountering an individual who has experienced drug poisoning

- Have staff ever responded to a drug poisoning on site?
- Do staff regularly encounter people who have experienced a drug poisoning somewhere else?
- Do staff regularly encounter people who may use drugs?
- Do staff regularly encounter people in recovery from a substance use disorder?
- Do staff regularly encounter illegal/illicit drugs or unknown substances?

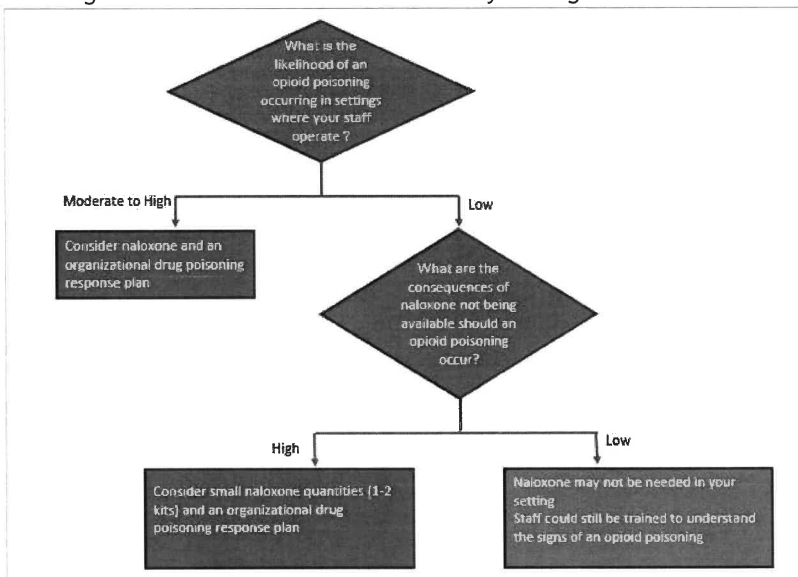
If you determine that the likelihood of encountering someone experiencing a drug poisoning is moderate to high, naloxone should be acquired and protocols should be developed to prepare staff to respond to a drug poisoning. If the likelihood is low, consider the consequences of not having naloxone available in your setting should someone experience a drug poisoning.

Potential consequences of not having naloxone available

- How long would it take for emergency medical personnel to arrive and administer naloxone? Every minute in which a person is not breathing increases the likelihood of death or irreversible brain damage. If naloxone were available onsite, could it be retrieved and used faster than emergency medical personnel could arrive?
- Are staff trained, willing, and able to provide breaths while waiting for emergency medical personnel to arrive? Providing breaths can prevent brain damage and death even if there is a delay in administering naloxone. If responders are able and willing to provide breaths, it should be part of every drug poisoning response, even if naloxone is used.
- Does your organization have a mandated duty to provide care for clients?
- Are there public or community expectations with regard to naloxone being available in this setting?

Weighing likelihood and consequence

Use your assessment of (i) the likelihood of someone witnessing an opioid poisoning and (ii) the consequence of not having naloxone available to determine if your organization should consider stocking naloxone in your setting.



Use the Naloxone Needs Assessment Decision-Making Template on the next page to detail your decision making on naloxone.

Naloxone Needs Assessment Decision-Making Template

This template provides a way to assess the need for your organization to stock naloxone and train staff, for your purposes only. Complete and file per your organization's guidelines.

Organization:	Date:
Risk: [list all staff, client groups, and members of the public who may be at risk of drug poisoning]	
Risk Identification and Mitigation Strategies: [provide an overview of risk for staff or clients/members of the public, and risk mitigation strategies as well as gaps that may exist]	
Likelihood of a drug poisoning in this setting: High/Low (circle one) Comments:	
Consequence of a drug poisoning in the absence of naloxone in this setting: High/Low (circle one) Comments:	
Recommendations:	
We recognize that if this assessment identifies we should stock naloxone, all staff expected to use it will be trained on how to safely respond to a drug poisoning and administer naloxone (please check) <input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommended resource when thinking about preparing for overdoses in your organization: [The First Seven Minutes Overdose Prevention](#)