

February 3, 2020

Dear Mr. Koops,

On behalf of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), I am writing to inform you that on January 22, 2020, MDHHS will launch a Naloxone Online Portal where designated entities can request kits of naloxone, a medication which reverses the effects of an opioid overdose, online and receive them for free within 2 days. **MDHHS has reserved 20,000+ free kits for jails and respectfully seeks their partnership to offer kits to individuals leaving jail who use opioids.**

Jails can request kits through a brief online form [here](#).

In 2018, opioid overdoses killed over 2,000 Michiganders, at a rate of over 5 people killed every day. The goal of the Naloxone Online Portal is to reach individuals with an opioid use disorder (OUD) through the entities that touch them every day. As you know, many individuals using opioids interact with the criminal justice system and county jails. When an individual using opioids enters jail and abstains from using substances, their tolerance falls significantly; if the individual resumes use after leaving jail, they face a very high risk of overdose. [One study](#) found that the risk of opioid overdose was over 50 times higher for individuals leaving incarceration than the general public.

In order to reduce fatal opioid overdoses in Michigan, MDHHS strongly recommends providing naloxone kits to individuals who are discharged from a jail facility as well as individuals in closest proximity to an individual with an opioid use disorder. Naloxone is a safe, FDA-approved medication that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose. Administering naloxone to an individual who is not overdosing does not cause any harm, and it has no narcotic effect. Jails are key partners in distributing naloxone to individuals at risk of overdose as well as those in closest proximity. For that reason, MDHHS designated 20,000+ free naloxone kits for jail facilities.

Each of the Naloxone “kits” we are distributing contain two doses of naloxone. It can be important in a high overdose risk population to have more than one dose available, either because one dose might be insufficient in a particular overdose, or because having an extra dose after one is used allows there to be additional rescue available in the future. When placing your request, please therefore indicate the number of kits you are interested in receiving.

In addition, please note that there are many other means to receive naloxone. For example, Michigan issued a Naloxone Standing Order in 2016 that allows a pharmacist to dispense naloxone without an individual prescription. A pharmacist can register for the Standing Order [online](#). Please also note that Michigan law addresses permission to dispense naloxone (see MCL 333.17744b).

Sincerely,

Dr. Deb Pinals, M.D.  
Medical Director  
Behavioral Health and Forensic Programs  
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services