

# Implementing a Standing Order Prescription for Naloxone Provider Best Practices

## Importance of Standing Order prescriptions for Naloxone Rescue Kits

Naloxone and other opioid antagonist medications reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, providing time for emergency responders to arrive. When coupled with education on how to recognize and intervene in cases of overdose, community members with medications such as naloxone rescue kits have helped prevent many deaths. Therefore hospitals are encouraged to coordinate with appropriate staff to provide a Naloxone standing order within the hospital's outpatient pharmacy, if available.

## Who are these for?

Naloxone or other opioid antagonist medications should be dispensed to anyone who the treating clinician has determined is at risk of an opioid related overdose, a family member or friend of an at-risk person, or any person who may be in a position to assist an at-risk person in the event of an overdose.

## Recommended practices for a Naloxone standing order policy within hospitals:

The goal is to enable a pharmacist to dispense Naloxone or other FDA-approved opioid antagonist medications without the need for an individual prescription for every order filled. The Department of Public Health has outlined the following criteria that must be followed for developing a Naloxone Standing Order Policy:

- **Identify a licensed and actively practicing prescriber** to agree to write the standing order to be provided to and securely kept at the hospital pharmacy.
- **Ensure completion of pharmacy participation requirements**
  - The standing order must be signed by a prescriber licensed in Massachusetts and kept on pharmacy premises, and must be renewed and updated annually
  - Standing order must be submitted to Board of Registration in Pharmacy via email [naloxonestandingorders@MassMail.State.MA.US](mailto:naloxonestandingorders@MassMail.State.MA.US)
  - Pharmacist must complete a commissioner-approved training program; this is available at this [Prescribe to Prevent Website](#).
  - The pharmacist should have knowledge of and should provide a copy of this [Naloxone information Pamphlet](#) with each Naloxone rescue kits. Full details on all requirements that a pharmacist and prescriber should follow are available at this DPH approved [MassTAPP Website](#)
  - Naloxone rescue kits must be labeled and include expiration date
- **Ensure patient/consumer education.** Pharmacists are strongly encouraged to counsel the patient/consumer at the point of sale to ensure successful use of Naloxone and to best prepare any person who may need to administer Naloxone. This may include providing information from the second page of the Naloxone Information Pamphlet or following other resources available from this [DPH Naloxone Access Website](#)
- **Pharmacies with Existing Naloxone Standing Orders:** Please note that there are several pharmacies in Massachusetts that have existing standing orders on file and providers may want to refer patients to these locations: [Pharmacies with standing orders](#)

## Additional Information/Resources

- The Department of Public Health has provided several resources to assist with setting up a standing order, which are available at the bottom of this [MassTAPP Website](#).
- [Get Naloxone Now](#) is an online resource to train people to respond effectively to an opioid-associated overdose emergency.
- [www.prescribetoprevent.org](http://www.prescribetoprevent.org) is a website for providers with general information about naloxone dispensing.