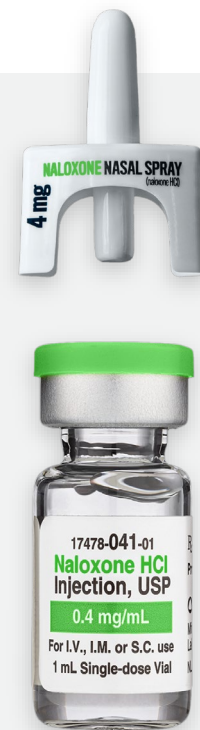


## Naloxone Distribution and Dispensing in the Emergency Department and Acute Care Setting

On average, 21,533 individuals are discharged from Florida Emergency Departments for opioid-related diagnoses each year (average based on 2020-2022 ED discharges).

Naloxone is an emergency opioid antagonist medication that is readily available and well-known for its effectiveness in saving lives. Hospital leaders, pharmacists, emergency departments, and inpatient providers are encouraged to work together to ensure that take-home naloxone kits are offered at no cost and dispensed to any patient in the emergency department or inpatient setting identified as an overdose or as being at risk for opioid overdose. The naloxone kits should also be offered at no cost to friends, family members, or caregivers of those who have overdosed or are at risk for overdose as well.

As naloxone has become more readily available, myths around access, cost, availability, and use have emerged. Here are some of the most common myths surrounding the distribution and dispensing of Narcan in the emergency department and acute care setting:



**✗ MYTH** 1 | Naloxone kits are difficult for hospitals to obtain and may be costly to the patient.

**✓ FACT** Through the Department of Children and Families Overdose Prevention Program (OPP), hospitals and other organizations can enroll to receive **FREE** naloxone kits for distribution to individuals, family members, and caregivers.

To enroll in the DCF Overdose Prevention Program (OPP) please contact: [ISAVEFL@myflfamilies.com](mailto:ISAVEFL@myflfamilies.com)

**✗ MYTH** 2 | Providing individuals with naloxone encourages, enables, and increases the misuse of opioids.

**✓ FACT** Research shows increasing health awareness through naloxone training and distribution reduces the misuse of opioids. In fact, naloxone saves lives and allows individuals who experience substance use disorders the opportunity to pursue a path of recovery from the disease of addiction.

Last Updated: July 2024

**✗ MYTH** 3 | Hospital Emergency Departments and inpatient providers cannot order and dispense a naloxone kit due to legislative and licensing limitations.

**✓ FACT** As of December 7, 2023, the Florida Board of Pharmacy provided a declaratory statement regarding Class III Institutional Licenses, allowing naloxone dispensing without an outpatient dispensing license. The Federal requirement for practitioners to have a waiver to prescribe buprenorphine was eliminated in 2023.

**✗ MYTH** 4 | A hospital Emergency Department must write a prescription at the time of discharge.

**✓ FACT** To save patients' lives, it is now more important than ever for Emergency Departments to 'ditch the scripts' and bring the meds to beds – in other words, engage in direct dispensing of naloxone out of the ED, as called for in the 2023 joint Policy Statement issued by the American College of Emergency Physicians, and as empowered through section 381.887, Florida Statutes.

**✗ MYTH** 5 | Naloxone nasal spray can now be purchased from pharmacies over the counter, so hospital and pharmacy staff no longer need to write prescriptions or directly dispense naloxone.

**✓ FACT** Even if individuals can obtain transportation to a community pharmacy with enough money to pay to have a naloxone prescription filled, there is no guarantee that pharmacies in Florida have it in stock and are willing to dispense it. According to a telephone audit of community pharmacies in Florida, naloxone nasal spray is available in only 69% of pharmacies in Florida.