



Hawaii State Department of Education

Opioid Overdose Prevention and Response Guidance

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Introduction

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department), along with the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH), federal, and community-based agencies, are collaborating to address opioid and other drug use, misuse, and overdose. This guidance relates to the emergency response process when there is a suspected opioid overdose and includes recommendations for storage and administration of the opioid overdose reversal medication, naloxone, in Department facilities. The Department intends to prevent and reduce the risk of opioid-related overdose deaths by providing training on opioid overdose response and improving access to opioid overdose reversal medication in its schools and offices.

Background

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has declared a national [opioid overdose epidemic](#). In the United States, the number of drug overdose deaths increased by nearly 30% from 2019 to 2020 and has quintupled since 1999. In Hawaii, there has been an increase in emergency department visits and drug overdose deaths associated with the recent influx of synthetic opioid products, especially illicitly manufactured fentanyl.

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist that is used to reverse the effects of opioids. The rapid identification of a potential opioid overdose and administration of naloxone may prevent death from opioid overdose, as well as, reduce disability and injury from opioid overdoses. The rapid administration of naloxone may be life-saving for individuals with an overdose due to opioid use. Ensuring ready access to naloxone is one of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) five (5) strategic approaches to prevent overdose deaths (SAMHSA, 2013). More recently, SAMHSA produced an [Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit](#) (2018) for relevant stakeholders, including "Safety Advice for Patients & Family Members."

The Department recognizes that opioid use and misuse affects students, parent(s)/legal guardian(s), staff, and community members in many possible ways:

- Opioids may be prescribed by a doctor to an individual for treatment of moderate to severe pain;
- Individuals may accidentally or intentionally use or misuse opioids in ways that result in an overdose;
- Any member of the school community could be using opioids when they are at a school or Department facility; and
- School community members may be dealing with opioid addiction in their family or household.

What are Opioids

Opioids are a class of drugs that derive from or mimic the substances in the opium poppy plant. These include prescription medications used to treat pain, as well as illicit drugs. Oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, morphine, fentanyl, and heroin are all examples of opioids and there are many more. Opioids reduce the body's perception of pain, however, they can also produce symptoms of drowsiness, constipation, euphoria, nausea, vomiting, and slowed breathing. During an opioid overdose, breathing and heartbeat slow or even stop.

Opioid Misuse Prevention

Schools foster a positive climate by providing information to students, staff, and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) on the potential for misuse of opioids, how to properly store and dispose of prescription drugs, and how to seek help. For example, the [Department Factsheet on Opioids: Misuse Prevention and Response](#) and the [Let's Talk About Opioids](#) brochure were developed and distributed for school use and these materials are posted online for public access.

Students are provided with high-quality, comprehensive, and [standards-based Health Education](#) to equip and empower them with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to address their current and future health needs and challenges. "Alcohol and Other Drug Use Prevention" is one of the priority health topics addressed during Health Education.

If there is a concern about a student's physical or mental health, it is possible to consult with a Hawaii Keiki nurse using the toll-free Health Hotline at **1-844-436-3888** Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Hawaii Standard Time), excluding holidays & school breaks. Translation services are available for non-English speaking individuals.

The Department is here to help support student's mental health and overall well-being through an array of school and community-based resources. If in crisis, don't hesitate:

- Call or text 988 - the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.
- Text ALOHA (25642) to 741741.
- Call 211 - Aloha United Way's Helpline.
- Call 911.

Department employees may connect with a licensed behavioral health specialist through their union benefits plan. The Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund Humana Plan and Hawaii Government Employees Association medical plans offer behavioral health or substance abuse assistance. Employee Assistance of the Pacific (EAP) also offers free behavioral health counseling to all Department employees. Appointments with EAP can be made by calling

(808) 597-8222 or 1-877-597-8222 (Neighbor islands toll free). More information for EAP services can be found at eapacific.com.

Opioid Overdose Response

Opioid overdose can be due to many factors. Some examples of how an overdose can occur include when a patient takes an opioid medication but miscalculates their dose; when prescribed opioids are combined with illicit drugs or alcohol that have adverse interactions; when someone deliberately misuses a prescription or uses an illicit opioid; or when experimenting with a substance that is combined with a strong opioid - with or without the user's knowledge.

Training

Priority role groups of Department employees may volunteer to attend training on opioid overdose response if approved by their supervisor. Check the Department's [Memos and Notices website](#) for more information about who is eligible to attend a training on opioid overdose response and how to register.

Hawaii Keiki program staff will conduct the training and it shall include at a minimum:

- A. Background information on opioids and the overdose epidemic;
- B. Signs of opioid misuse and overdose;
- C. Response procedures including the need to immediately call 911;
- D. Proper use of naloxone, if available;
- E. Practice of hands-only Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED);
- F. Related laws; and
- G. How to obtain naloxone.

It is strongly recommended that at least one (1) individual who works on-site at a Department school or office attend a training on opioid overdose response provided by a Hawaii Keiki nurse annually to prevent and reduce the risk of death from opioid overdose at the facility.

International Overdose Prevention Day is **August 31** and Hawaii Keiki program staff will provide Department employees opportunities to attend training on opioid overdose response annually around that date.

Related Laws

Consistent with Hawaii law, [HRS § 329E-2\(d\)](#), a Department employee who, acting in good faith and with reasonable care, administers an opioid antagonist to another person whom the person believes to be suffering an opioid-related drug overdose shall be immune from criminal

prosecution, sanction under any professional licensing law, and civil liability for acts or omissions resulting from the administration.

Naloxone

What is Naloxone

Naloxone is used to reverse the effects of opioids; it is an opioid antagonist. Naloxone works by blocking opioid receptor sites. It is not effective in treating overdoses of sedatives or stimulants (e.g. benzodiazepines, barbiturates, cocaine, methamphetamines, or MDMA). However, if opioids are taken in combination with other substances, naloxone may be helpful.

Obtaining Naloxone

Procurement and distribution of naloxone for the Department's schools and offices will be in collaboration with the DOH under the standing order of a Hawaii Keiki program licensed Advanced Practice Registered Nurse. Department schools and offices with at least one (1) employee who has completed the Hawaii Keiki provided training on opioid overdose response within the past 12 months are eligible to request naloxone. It is recommended to have at least two (2) naloxone kits at each school or office, when possible. Additional kits, 1 per 500 individuals, would facilitate access to supplies in multiple locations (e.g., front office, gym, and health room) and larger populations. Each kit contains two (2) doses of naloxone. Please complete the Naloxone Request Form which can be found at bit.ly/3khbAJZ to request naloxone for a school or office.

Individuals who would like to carry their own supply of naloxone, may request the medication at [a local pharmacy](#) or via the [Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center](#). Anyone can carry naloxone in Hawaii.

Maintaining Naloxone

Each school and office will be responsible for the storage and maintenance of its naloxone supplies. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for storage. Conduct routine inspections, at least two (2) times per year (e.g., August and January), to ensure that the medication is readily available during an emergency and not expired.

The naloxone storage location(s) should be secure, but not locked during those times when it is most likely to be needed, as determined by the school or office administrator. All trained staff should be made aware of the storage location(s).

The following are recommendations for naloxone storage:

- A. Identify locations where individuals are at greatest risk of opioid overdose;

- B. Facilitate accessibility for rapid use by authorized person(s);
- C. Keep medication away from direct sunlight and/or heat;
- D. Make the expiration date easily apparent for inspection;
- E. Use tamper evident packaging; and
- F. Place it near an AED, if available, or other rescue medications.

Use of Naloxone

In case of suspected opioid overdose, the trained staff shall follow the protocols outlined in the “Opioid Overdose Response Training” provided by the Hawaii Keiki program.

Administration and management of naloxone shall not be required in circumstances of unavailability of naloxone, unavailability of trained staff, and/or uncertainty as to whether an opioid overdose is occurring. Emergency medical services (911) shall be called in all circumstances when naloxone is administered at a school or office. Nothing in this guidance is intended to regulate, restrict or otherwise deter a law enforcement officer, emergency medical technician, licensed medical professional, or other authorized individual from administering his/her own supply of naloxone when responding in good faith to a suspected opioid drug overdose occurring at a Department property.

If the school or office naloxone supply is used to respond to someone with signs of an opioid overdose, replenish supplies as soon as possible by completing the Naloxone Request Form which can be found at <http://bit.ly/3khbAJZ>.

After a Suspected Opioid Overdose

As with any emergency, follow the Department's [Emergency Operations Plan](#) for communication and notification procedures.

When the individual who was observed with signs of opioid misuse or overdose is enrolled as a student in a Department school, contact the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) as soon as possible. Record the event in the [Infinite Campus Health Module](#) and implement [Chapter 19](#) protocols, as appropriate.

Per [Chapter 19](#), any student who reasonably appears to be under the influence of an intoxicating substance or illicit drug at school or attending a department-supervised activity may be excluded from attending school. Per Section 302A-1134.6(f)(1), Hawaii Revised Statutes, the administrator shall arrange to have the student screened for substance abuse assessment by one of the school's trained screeners.

Survivors of opioid overdose have been through a traumatic event and most individuals will need extra support to take the next steps towards physical and emotional recovery. The individual who has experienced an overdose is not the only one who has endured a traumatic

event - family members, friends, and first responders may feel impacted by the experience. It takes a lot of courage to reach out to others and build a network of support. Please reference the aforementioned chapter on Opioid Misuse Prevention and Resources (below) for more information about where to get help.

Resources

[FindTreatment.gov](#)

[Hawaii Overdose Ike](#)

[Department Factsheet on Opioids: Misuse Prevention and Response](#)

[Hawaii State Department of Health Overdose Prevention and Naloxone](#)

[Let's Talk About Opioids](#)

[National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens](#)

[SAMHSA Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit](#)

[Substance Use - Issue Brief](#)

[TeenLink Hawaii](#)

[You Matter! Health Resources for Hawaii's Middle and High School Youth](#)