



**New York City Department of
Health and Mental Hygiene**

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Dear Health Care Professional:

In 2016, more New Yorkers died from drug overdose than homicides, suicides and motor vehicle crashes combined. Eighty percent of overdose deaths involved an opioid. These deaths are preventable. As part of HealingNYC, the City's opioid overdose prevention initiative, the New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is working with health care providers and communities to prevent overdose deaths with naloxone.

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist that reverses the effect of an opioid and prevents fatal overdose. New York State law allows trained community members to carry and use naloxone as a first aid response to an overdose. As a NYC health care provider, you are uniquely positioned to educate patients about overdose prevention and to offer naloxone to at-risk patients in one of four ways: prescribe to patients; direct patients to a pharmacy that dispenses naloxone via standing order; refer patients to a registered opioid overdose prevention program (OOPP) that dispenses free naloxone; or register as an OOPP to directly dispense free naloxone to patients.

You can make a powerful impact on the health of your patients and NYC by implementing these small changes to your practice:

- Identify patients at risk of an opioid overdose, including those receiving chronic opioid therapy (for three months or longer), using illicit opioids (e.g., heroin) or those who receive concurrent opioid and benzodiazepine prescriptions.
- Offer naloxone to at-risk patients, or patients who have at-risk friends or family members, by prescribing directly or by referring to a pharmacy or a registered program.
- Educate patients on how to use naloxone. Health care providers can use the Health Department's free Stop OD NYC app to provide information on recognizing and responding to an overdose using naloxone.

This **Naloxone Action Kit** includes clinical tools and resources for you and educational materials for your patients. To access the materials online, including Stop OD NYC, visit nyc.gov/health and search for "naloxone."

Thank you for your dedication to the health of New Yorkers, and for your partnership in reversing this epidemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary T. Bassett".

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
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