



INFO SHEET

NALOXONE AND THE ROLE OF THE LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE IN ALBERTA

The legislative mandate of the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) is to serve and protect the public by ensuring its members deliver safe, competent and ethical nursing care. An Info Sheet informs membership on relevant nursing topics or the CLPNA's processes.

Recent statistics continue to show a rise in deaths and emergency care visits related to fentanyl and other opioid overdoses in Alberta. This FACT Sheet describes the Licensed Practical Nurse's (LPN) role in protecting the public by providing education and interventions to prevent and counteract opioid overdoses.

Making Naloxone Available to At Risk Albertans
Naloxone is the primary drug used in Alberta to reverse the effects of opioid overdose. **Take-Home Naloxone (THN) Kits** are provided by Alberta Health for distribution across Alberta.

Take-Home Naloxone Kits can be distributed directly to clients by community agencies, allowing clients who have been assessed as at risk of an overdose or upon request to be given a Kit for use in the event of an overdose.

A map of locations where Naloxone has been unscheduled is available at [Alberta Health Services Take Home Naloxone Walk-in Clinics and Pharmacies](#). An important part of the LPNs role in distributing THN Kits is to provide client education around the indications and instructions for Kit use.

LPNs may distribute THN Kits in Emergency Departments and Urgent Care Centres without an order from an authorized prescriber and where the use of the THN Kit is for the emergency treatment of opioid overdose outside of a hospital setting. Documentation shall include the number of kits distributed.

LPNs may distribute the THN Kits provided by Alberta Health to clients as long as they have appropriate training and employer support.

To ensure best practice when distributing THN Kits, LPNs shall offer to provide education including:

- how to assess for signs of overdose;
- the importance of calling 911;
- how to perform rescue breathing;
- how to draw up the naloxone;
- the dosing of naloxone;
- how to administer an intramuscular injection; and
- how to assess the response of the patient to determine the need for additional doses while waiting for the arrival of Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

Additionally, across all care settings LPNs may be asked to

- educate clients about Naloxone use, indications and availability; and
- administer Naloxone to clients under a client-specific physician order or medical protocol.

To support the principle of harm reduction the LPN role may also include providing clients with education and guidance in safe injection practices, assessing client's other health/socioeconomic needs and providing support and direction to services as appropriate.

Regardless of the care setting all nursing interventions related to client care should be



documented following CLPNA standards and agency policy.

Administering Take-Home Naloxone Kits

In these kits, Naloxone is administered through intramuscular injection to the upper thigh. Its onset of action is 2 to 5 minutes following the injection, and its effect is expected to last 30 to 60 minutes. In reversing the effect of the opioid in the client's system, Naloxone may cause withdrawal leading to agitation and anger.¹

Hypersensitivity to Naloxone is the only known contraindication for the drug and occurs only in very

rare cases.² It has no potential for misuse as it does not get a person intoxicated, stoned or high. It will also have no effect if a person has not taken opioids.³ Alberta Health Services offers online Naloxone training for both employees and non-employees. LPNs should check with their employer to see what additional training may be required before distributing THN Naloxone Kits or administering Naloxone in the event of an overdose.

OTHER RESOURCES

[Alberta Health](#)

[Alberta Health Services \(AHS\)](#)

REFERENCES

¹ Alberta Health Services Take Home Naloxone Training.

² <https://www.drugs.com/sfx/naloxone-side-effects.html>

³ Alberta Health Services Take Home Naloxone Training from the Health Care Learning Portal.

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