



Date: November 29, 2016

To: All Medical First Responders/Agencies

From: EHS Medical First Response Program

Re: Bystander Naloxone Administration and MFR Overdose Clinical Procedures

Hi Everyone,

Over the last few months, Emergency Health Services (EHS) has been working with the other divisions of the Department of Health & Wellness and the Department of Justice on a strategy to handle potential increases of patients with opioid use disorders.

To date, there has not been a spike in opioid overdoses in Nova Scotia as seen in other Canadian Provinces, like British Columbia. However, as it is an evolving risk, EHS has become a member of a Provincial Task Force, led by the Provincial Medical Officer of Health (Dr. Strang), with the goal of addressing this issue.

Through this Provincial Task Force, the EHS Provincial Medical Director and the EHS MFR program are actively reviewing MFRs treatment of opioid overdose, including if naloxone will be added to MFR practice and the best method to administer the medication.

EHS is aware that some community service organizations are providing bystander naloxone kits and training to members of the community. While we support the individual bystander response at the community level, I must caution MFR Agencies that **EHS MFRs do not have protocols or policies enabling MFR administration of naloxone** at the present time.

What to do should you respond to a possible drug overdose:

As with all calls we respond to, MFR Safety is paramount!

- Ensure Scene Safety

Ensure your safety at all times and ensure you have a way out of the room.
If not safe, back out and notify EHS Medical Communications Centre that Police are required.

- Complete your Primary Survey
- If unresponsive and not breathing, check for pulse. If pulse is present, begin Artificial Respiration using an OP or NP Airway and a Bag Valve Mask attached to an Oxygen Source.

- If no pulse is present, begin CPR and attach an AED and follow instructions.
- Update EHS Medical Communications Centre via TMR. Radio
- If the patient is responsive, breathing and has a patent airway, complete a Secondary Survey.

We acknowledge that the increased media coverage concerning opioid overdoses, especially fentanyl, can be worrisome to our responders. As the safety of our MFRs is of highest importance, EHS needs to ensure that any program developed has patient AND responder safety in the forefront.

As we receive more information from the Provincial Task Force we will be posting on our website at www.ehsmfr.ca

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew H. Travers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr Andrew Travers

Provincial Medical Director

Emergency Health Services