



Declaration of Public Health Emergency Update Commissioner Cheryl Bartlett, R.N.



Emergency Actions

- On March 27, 2014, Governor Deval Patrick declared a public health emergency in response to the growing opioid addiction epidemic.
- Subsequent to this declaration, Commissioner Bartlett requested and received the approval of the Public Health Council to take the following actions:
 - Order expanded access to naloxone for individuals in a position to assist a person experiencing an opioid-related overdose.
 - Prohibit the prescribing and dispensing of hydrocodone-only medication until adequate measures are in place to safeguard against the potential for diversion, overdose and misuse.
 - Issue emergency regulations to permit first responders to carry and administer naloxone (Narcan), a safe and effective opioid antagonist.
 - Work with staff to develop a proposal to the Council on accelerating the mandatory use of prescription monitoring by physicians and pharmacies.



- Expand Naloxone to Bystanders
 - \$300,000 added to Bystander Naloxone Program agencies statewide to increase capacity to do training in overdose prevention, recognition and response including administration of intra-nasal naloxone.
 - The Board of Pharmacy is drafting a letter providing guidance to licensees and other stakeholders regarding the Commissioner's Order and access to Naloxone.
 - The letter outlines and explains protocols and procedures for obtaining a standing order so all pharmacies have the ability to participate and make Naloxone available to patients and bystanders
 - Once completed the letter will be posted on the Board's website, disseminated by email to the Board's regular distribution list, and be presented and reviewed at upcoming scheduled outreach meetings



Naloxone for First Responders

- First Responder Regulations

- Changes to the First Responder regulations were distributed to all regional EMS offices, regional medical directors, state EMS director, EMS agencies, EMCAB members and training institutions
- OEMS also reached out to police training Council as they are responsible for training approximately 30,000 first responders, to advised them of the emergency regulation changes
- OEMS has prepared information, as well as the new protocol, which now applies to first responders and this was posted to the OEMS website
- OMES has circulated the administrative requirement pertaining to first responder training which will also be posted





- Prohibit Hydrocodone Bitartrate Product in Hydrocodone-Only Extended-Release Formulation
 - A circular letter was drafted by the Drug Control Program and was endorsed by the Board of Pharmacy to inform prescribers and dispensers about the prohibition of hydrocodone-only extended release formulation.
 - The circular letter has been distributed to all Massachusetts Controlled Substance Registrants (including hospitals, clinics, individual health care providers, researchers) and additional communications have been sent through distribution lists and listservs
 - On April 1, 2014, the Board of Registration in Pharmacy voted to approve an amendment to its regulation at 247 CMR 10.00, on an emergency basis, to make explicit that violation of, or failure to comply with, a Commissioner's Order issued pursuant to a Declaration of an Emergency Detrimental to Public Health is grounds for discipline.



Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP)

- Currently, approximately 40% of practitioners (physicians, dentists, veterinarians, podiatrists) are enrolled in the PMP.
 - Enrollment by these prescribers is expected to be at 100% by December 2014
- The Drug Control Program (DCP) is creating PMP support tools such as educational videos and online 'how to' manuals to help prescribers understand how to better utilize the PMP as a clinical decision-making tool.
- In conjunction with the Commissioner's office, the DCP is developing local and state data tools to analyze Schedule II and Schedule III opioid utilization and prescribing trends.
 - Data will be shared locally and will help prescribers and law enforcement understand the volume of opioids being prescribed and dispensed throughout areas of the Commonwealth.



- Inter-Agency Council on Substance Abuse (IACSA)–
Opioid Task Force
 - Purpose: The Task Force will investigate all aspects of opioid abuse including but not limited to: how to better coordinate services, ensure a full range of treatment regardless of insurance, and how to divert non-violent criminal defendants struggling with addiction into treatment programs.
 - Convened members from various sectors across the Commonwealth including providers, family members, community leaders and members of the Executive Committee of the IACSA, with first meeting held April 7.
 - Task Force to make recommendations within 60 days.



- Commissioner Actions
 - Participated with Hilary Jacobs , BSAS Director, in training video for first responders' usage of Narcan
 - Spoke at the Addiction Nurses Conference
 - Attended MOAR (Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery) Statewide Alcohol Awareness Town Hall Meeting
 - Attended the National Prescription Take Back Press Conference with Mayor Marty Walsh and Congressman Joe Kennedy
 - Meeting with Federal agencies
 - Communicating with mayors, law enforcement and stakeholders
- Public Health Advisory
 - A Public Health Advisory has been issued on the DPH website to the public and providers on opioid overdose