



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

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The Honorable Dave Burke
Chair, Ohio Senate Health and Human Services Committee
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Burke,

I am writing in support of a proposed amendment to House Bill 341, regarding the requirements to allow entities to furnish the opioid overdose reversal drug naloxone. As COVID-19 has dominated the public health conversation for a large part of the past two months, fatal opioid overdoses have continued to be a leading cause of death in Franklin County and across the state of Ohio. This proposed amendment, which is supported by the Ohio Board of Pharmacy, will make naloxone more accessible throughout our state, and ultimately save the lives of Ohioans.

Current law requires entities to be licensed as terminal distributors of dangerous drugs (TDDD) to furnish naloxone, but naloxone is widely accepted as extremely safe. If administered to an individual incorrectly identified to be suffering from an overdose, the drug has no negative effect. The proposed amendment would eliminate this requirement. Additionally, the amendment would allow for naloxone to be made publicly accessible, much like AEDs, another important step in saving Ohioans lives. Often in the case of an overdose, the time it takes for a call to be made to EMS and for them to arrive on scene can be the difference between life and death. With naloxone readily accessible to the public, those deaths can be prevented. The proposed language also allows the Board to issue rules on remote storage and automated distribution of the drug, such as in naloxone vending machines, which we believe can not only save lives, but help reduce the stigma around the disease that is addiction.

Here at OSUWMC we have made distributing naloxone a priority in our response to the opioid crisis. Addiction is a relapsing disease, and often our patients in long term recovery have experienced an overdose at some point in their journey to recovery. An overdose reversed by naloxone is often the turning point in one's battle with addiction. If the proposed amendment is adopted, HB 341 will remove many of the barriers preventing widespread distribution of naloxone throughout our state, and allow more Ohioans' lives to be saved. We encourage the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee to include this language in to HB 341 and to pass the legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Julie Teater, MD
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