

**Department of Health  
Medical Quality Assurance Commission  
Policy Statement**

Title:	Possession and Administration of Naloxone	MD2015-04
References:	RCW 69.50.315, RCW 18.130.345	
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Approved By:	Richard D. Brantner, MD, FAAEM, Chair (signature on file)	

### Purpose

To further the legislature’s intent to prevent opiate-related overdoses, the Medical Quality Assurance Commission supports physicians providing naloxone to law enforcement and fire department personnel without a prescription.

### Background

Naloxone is a prescription drug that has been successfully used to reverse potentially fatal drug-related overdoses. It is considered one of the most important medications in the health system.<sup>i</sup>

In 2010, the Washington State Legislature passed legislation to prevent opiate-related overdoses by providing immunity to people who seek medical assistance in a drug overdose situation. Specifically, the legislature amended the Uniform Controlled Substances Act to permit a person to possess and administer naloxone to someone suffering from an apparent opioid-related overdose.<sup>ii</sup> The legislature also amended the Uniform Disciplinary Act to permit the administering, dispensing, prescribing, purchasing, acquisition, possession or use of naloxone if there is a good faith effort to assist a person experiencing an opiate-related overdose or a person in a position to assist a person experiencing an opiate-related overdose.<sup>iii</sup>

The Office of the U.S. Attorney General recently called on police and fire departments to equip their employees with naloxone to reverse heroin overdoses.

The Commission has no policy or regulation that prohibits the providing of naloxone to law enforcement and fire department personnel, or prohibits the possession or use of naloxone by such personnel. However, there is currently no mechanism by which a licensed healthcare provider with prescriptive authority can provide supplies of naloxone to law enforcement and fire department personnel.

## Policy

The Medical Quality Assurance Commission supports the possession and use of naloxone by police and fire department personnel to administer persons to reverse drug-related overdoses and save lives. The Medical Commission recognizes that there must be an efficient mechanism by which law enforcement and fire department personnel can obtain supplies of naloxone without a prescription.

The Medical Commission encourages law enforcement to work with the county health officer<sup>iv</sup> and fire department personnel to work with the county medical program director<sup>v</sup> to obtain supplies of naloxone. Each county should ensure that such personnel have the appropriate training to possess and administer naloxone. The Medical Commission considers the providing of naloxone to law enforcement and fire department personnel without a prescription or a physician-patient relationship to be in the public interest.

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<sup>ii</sup> ["WHO Model List of Essential Medicines"](#). *World Health Organization*. October 2013.

<sup>ii</sup> RCW 69.50.315(1)

<sup>iii</sup> RCW 18.130.345.

<sup>iv</sup> RCW 70.05.050.

<sup>v</sup> RCW 18.71.205(4).