

Rita Landgraf, Secretary
Jill Fredel, Director of Communications
302-255-9047, Cell 302-357-7498
Email: jill.fredel@state.de.us

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES IN HOW TO ADMINISTER THE OVERDOSE-REVERSING DRUG NALOXONE WILL BEGIN OCT. 25

NEW CASTLE (Oct. 9, 2014) - Delaware will expand the use of the overdose-reversing drug naloxone beyond medical providers with the start of monthly education classes for community members on how to administer the drug, beginning with an Oct. 25 class at Brandywine Springs School in Wilmington.

The one-hour classes are the result of legislation passed earlier this year by the General Assembly and signed into law in June by Gov. Jack Markell to reduce the rising number of deaths from accidental opiate overdoses tied to prescription pain medications or heroin. The law allows for family members, friends or individuals with an addiction to be trained on how to use the nasal spray naloxone, and to carry and administer the drug.

From January through August of this year, Delaware has had 132 suspected overdose deaths, many of which involved heroin or prescription painkillers. By comparison, in all of 2013, a total of 99 people died as the result of car accidents in Delaware. Across the country, heroin overdose deaths alone increased 45 percent between 2006 and 2010.

"We can't help people recover from their addiction unless we keep them alive," Gov. Markell said. "This state-coordinated training in the use of naloxone will provide more Delawareans with the ability to save lives. We already know that the drug is effective in emergency rooms and through its use by EMS units. This expanded use is one important step forward in addressing addiction and making more recoveries possible in our state."

The Delaware Overdose Survival Education (DOSE) classes are approved by the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and will be offered by Brandywine Counseling and Community Services.

A companion bill, signed into law by Gov. Markell in August, allows police officers to carry and administer naloxone. Separate training classes for police officers who will carry naloxone already have begun.

"For many Delaware families, the pain of loss from a loved one's accidental overdose death has become far too common," DHSS Secretary Rita Landgraf said. "Naloxone training will bring a measure of comfort to families and friends who must live with the

daily life-and-death burden that, unfortunately, comes along with addiction. When individuals suffering from addiction are ready to take the first step toward recovery, we will be there to support them and their families."

The first community naloxone training class will be at 1 p.m. Oct. 25 at Brandywine Springs School, 916 Duncan Road. The class will be part of Passport to Awareness, a daylong Make a Difference Day event at the school hosted by atTAcK addiction, a grassroots advocacy group, and The News Journal. AtTAcK addiction was instrumental in the passage of both the community and the police naloxone bills.

Future community naloxone training classes will be held at locations across the state. No registration is required for the classes. They will be first-come, first-served. There is no cost for the class; the nasal spray naloxone kit will be \$50, but DHSS' Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health has provisions for those who can't afford the payment.

A preliminary schedule:

- **Nov. 11:** 6 p.m., Delaware Agriculture Museum, 866 N. Dupont Highway, Dover.
- **December:** No class scheduled. 2015.
- **Jan. 22:** 6 p.m., Delaware Technical Community College's Owens Campus, 21179 College Drive, Georgetown.
- **Feb. 23:** 6:30 p.m., Appoquinimink Library, 651 N. Broad St., #101, Middletown.
- **March 30:** 6 p.m., Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County, 300 E. Lea Blvd., Wilmington.
- **April 20:** 7 p.m., Woodlawn Library, 2020 W. Ninth St., Wilmington.
- **May 18:** 6 p.m., Delaware Technical Community College's Stanton Campus, 400 Stanton-Christiana Road, Newark.
- **June 15:** Time and place to be announced.
- **July 9:** Time and place to be announced.
- **Sept. 8:** Time to be announced, Delaware Technical Community College's Terry Campus, 100 Campus Drive, Dover.

Along with the nasal spray naloxone kit, individuals who complete the class will receive a wallet-sized card containing training information.

For more information on the classes, call Brandywine Counseling at 302-504-5920, email bccs@brandywinecounselng.org, or go to www.brandywinecounseling.org. The naloxone education class schedule will be posted on the DHSS website.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations.