



# 7 Ways States Can Boost Access to Naloxone

Greater availability of the opioid overdose reversal drug can save lives

Naloxone is a lifesaving medication—it can reverse an opioid overdose quickly and safely.<sup>1</sup> It's available by prescription and over the counter, and many local health departments and community organizations provide it for free.<sup>2</sup> Anyone can use naloxone to help someone experiencing an overdose, even with no medical training.

Without a doubt, naloxone is one of the best tools to address the overdose crisis—but only if people have access to it. Here are seven ways state policymakers can help.

## 1 Expand naloxone prescribing.

Require health care providers to prescribe naloxone to patients taking prescription opioids and allow providers to write prescriptions for the family and friends of people who use opioids.



## 2 Make naloxone more available and affordable in pharmacies.

Encourage pharmacies to have prescription and over-the-counter naloxone on shelves and require that Medicaid state plans cover the medication.



## 3 Connect communities with naloxone.

Provide free naloxone to community-based organizations, allow them to bill Medicaid and private insurance for purchased naloxone given to patients, and let the organizations negotiate discounted purchase rates.



## 4 Have all first responders carry naloxone.

Connect first responders with local training programs so they feel confident recognizing overdoses and administering and distributing naloxone.



## Pair naloxone with automated external defibrillators.

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Put these lifesaving tools together in public spaces—from government buildings to college campuses to airports and beyond.



## Give naloxone to people in immediate need.

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Make sure patients leaving hospitals following an overdose, people leaving jails or prisons, and patients exiting substance use treatment programs are all given naloxone on the way out.



## Put naloxone in schools.

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Allow schools and employees to store and administer naloxone and teach students about overdose prevention as part of a substance use curriculum.



## Endnotes

- 1 “Naloxone DrugFacts,” National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2022, <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/naloxone>.
- 2 “Naloxone DrugFacts,” National Institute on Drug Abuse.

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**For more information, please visit: [pew.org](https://pew.org)**

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## The Pew Charitable Trusts

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