

For Immediate Release

June 5, 2017

Take Home Naloxone kits now available in Five Hills Health Region

As part of Saskatchewan's expanding Take Home Naloxone program, the Five Hills Health Region and the Moose Jaw Police Service are pleased to announce that Take Home Naloxone kits will be available in Moose Jaw beginning Tuesday, June 6, 2017.

“It is important for people to be aware of the health risk posed by opioid drugs, such as fentanyl, that are mixed and sold illegally, and ensure that resources, such as the Take Home Naloxone kits, are in place to potentially save lives,” said Rick Bourassa, MJ Police Chief. “It’s important to remember that these risks are present in all communities in Saskatchewan, including our own.”

Fentanyl is an opioid that is 50 to 100 times more potent than heroin, oxycodone or morphine. It is a prescribed painkiller often added to illegal drugs without people knowing. Overdose deaths attributed to fentanyl have recently been rising across Canada. Naloxone is an antidote to opioids such as fentanyl, morphine, heroin, methadone or oxycodone. It is in use in Saskatchewan as an opioid overdose treatment practice in emergency departments and by paramedics in emergency situations. When administered properly, Naloxone can restore breathing to an individual experiencing an overdose.

The Ministry of Health has provided \$50,000 provincially to fund the development and implementation of the Take Home Naloxone program across the province. This allows the Take Home Naloxone kits to be available free of charge to individuals at risk of an opioid overdose. Along with the kit, education is provided on overdose prevention as well as recognition and response (including naloxone administration). Training will also be available to those who have a higher likelihood of witnessing an overdose.

Take Home Naloxone kits do not replace the need for immediate treatment by trained medical professionals for anyone who has overdosed on fentanyl or any drug. If you suspect someone has overdosed, you should call 9-1-1. The use of a Take Home Naloxone kit may buy some critical time for first responders to reach the patient and begin treatment in the event of an opioid overdose.

“Five Hills Health Region is very pleased to be working collaboratively with our community partners via the Moose Jaw South Central Drug Strategy to address dangers associated with opioid (which includes fentanyl) overdose. We know that Naloxone does save lives and we want to ensure that those at risk of overdose can access a Take Home Naloxone kit,” said Mary Lee Booth, Executive Director of Integrated Community Health with the Five Hills Health Region.

The Take Home Naloxone program is now available in Five Hills, Saskatoon, Regina Qu’Appelle, Prairie North, Sunrise and Prince Albert Parkland health regions. The expansion of the Take Home Naloxone

program is an important addition to the range of services available to help at-risk individuals, and supports the Government of Saskatchewan's commitment to addressing the recommendations in the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan.

Individuals interested in more information about Take Home Naloxone kits or to inquire about training are asked to contact 306-691-6464.

Media availability

- Monday, June 5 2017 – 10:00 a.m.
- Crescent View Clinic, 131 1 Ave NE, Moose Jaw
- Mary Lee Booth, Executive Director, Integrated Community Health
- Chief Rick Bourassa, Moose Jaw Police

For further information, please contact:
Kyle Matthies
Vice President, People and Quality
306-694-8721
kyle.matthies@fhr.ca