

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For more information, please contact:**

**Melissa Lee at (989) 272-7209**

**[mlee@sccmha.org](mailto:mlee@sccmha.org)**

## **Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority Receives Funding for Overdose-Reversing Medication and Kits**

**SAGINAW, MI** – Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority (SCCMHA) has received funding from Mid-State Health Network to increase the availability of the opioid overdose-reversing medication Naloxone (Narcan) for first responders throughout Saginaw County. Several hundred kits that include the life-saving medication will be purchased and distributed to first responders through Saginaw Valley Medical Control Authority, who will also coordinate trainings on administering the medication and follow-up care. Distribution of the kits will begin immediately.

“Opioid overdoses are devastating to families and the community,” explained Amy Murawski, Substance Use Disorder Coordinator at SCCMHA. “Drug overdose deaths, driven largely by prescription drug overdoses, are now the leading cause of death in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control. By having first responders throughout our entire county supplied with and trained on how to administer Naloxone, we will be better prepared to address this growing need and save more lives. Additionally, the training that will accompany the disbursement of these kits will help address the long-term care of individuals with opioid addictions. This isn’t meant to be a ‘quick fix’ program; we want to be able to provide necessary emergency care for individuals experiencing an overdose and then help them find their path to sustainable recovery.”

Naloxone is on the World Health Organization's List of Essential Medicines, classifying it as one of the most effective and safe medicines needed in a health system. It reverses overdose by opioids such as heroin, morphine, and oxycodone by blocking opioid receptor sites, reversing the toxic effects of the overdose. It can be administered through nasal spray, intramuscular (into the muscle) injection, subcutaneous (under the skin) injection, or intravenous injection. Naloxone is also non-addictive and has little to no effect if opioids are not present in the system, all but eliminating any side effects if given to an individual mistakenly believed to be suffering from an overdose.

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### **SCCMHA Funding Overdose Kits**

Each kit that is purchased with this funding includes pre-measured doses of the Naloxone medication and supplies needed to deliver it including a syringe and nasal spray adaptor. A certain amount of the funds used to purchase the kits will also be allocated to train first responders on how to properly administer the medication to individuals that they suspect are suffering from an opioid overdose, as well as proper follow up care including hospital evaluation and recommendations for long-term treatment options. All distribution of the Naloxone kits and training is being coordinated through Saginaw Valley Medical Control Authority.

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*Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority is headquartered at 500 Hancock Street in Saginaw. SCCMHA provides numerous services including evaluations, screenings, treatments and referrals. SCCMHA assists approximately 5,000 Saginaw County citizens each year.*