

Naloxone update – Naloxone moves to unscheduled drug status and future Take Home Naloxone kits will include three vials of naloxone

Further to Benefact 575 issued January 2016 and Benefact 612 issued May 2016, updates to the Take Home Naloxone (THN) Program are provided.

As of February 6, 2017, the *Scheduled Drugs Regulation* has been amended to make naloxone and its salts, when indicated for emergency use for opioid overdose outside hospital settings, unscheduled in order to facilitate broader access to THN kits.

As well, future THN kits will include three vials of naloxone in response to higher potency opioids in the community. Until kits with three vials of naloxone are available, pharmacists should continue to provide the two-dose kits.

As per the requirements of participation in the THN Program, pharmacies must continue to complete the following necessary steps:

- **always have THN kits on hand** (if you no longer wish to participate in the program, please send an email to naloxone.kit@ahs.ca);
- counsel clients receiving a THN kit (THN Program education must be completed by the pharmacist);
- document provision of each kit in the patient record (as applicable) and the Pharmaceutical Information Network (PIN). If the client is not able or willing to provide their PHN, the pseudo PHN NX0000000 should be used;
- provide a kit when requested (unless a clear contraindication is present). Refusal to provide a THN kit should only be done under extraordinary circumstances;
- provide one kit at a time. Subsequent kits can be provided to clients, as needed; and
- encourage those who have received a kit to participate in the Program survey.

To meet these requirements, kits should continue to be kept in the dispensary area of the pharmacy.

Importance of pharmacy participation in the Take Home Naloxone Program

The pharmacy community is thanked for participating in the THN Program. Distribution of THN kits through community pharmacies has had a positive impact. As of the end of December 2016, 759 community pharmacies had registered with Alberta Health Services (AHS) and distributed about 2,100 of the approximate 9,600 total THN kits given out. For the last months of 2016, roughly 200 kits per month were provided by pharmacies.

If your pharmacy is interested in participating in the THN Program, refer to the "Take Home Naloxone Program – Information for the Pharmacist" page available online at RxA's web site (<https://rxa.ca/professional-development/thn-program.aspx>). The Alberta Health Services (AHS) THN Program registration form can be found in the RxA training module.

For questions about the education program and/or pharmacy registration in the THN Program, please email rxa@rxa.ca. Please note that RxA's education program was developed when naloxone was a Schedule 1 product.

AHS's site www.stopods.ca also provides valuable information including a section for health professionals with educational videos and patient resources.

THN kit order information

THN kits can be obtained at no charge through McKesson (Item #90321) once a pharmacy is registered with AHS. Pharmacies may order two THN kits at a time, with the option to order more based on demand and approval by AHS. Kits can be re-ordered as often as required; there is adequate supply.

Receiving compensation for THN kit distribution

Alberta pharmacies will continue be paid up to \$12.30 for providing a THN kit and up to \$0.01 for THN kit costs (should your pharmacy software system not be able to accommodate a \$0.00 amount for the cost of the kit).

Claims for THN Program kits must be billed through the Alberta Blue Cross PRIDE RT direct bill claim system with the following mandatory elements:

- Carrier code 16 (as the third-party plan)
- Group 23464
- Client ID – Alberta Personal Health Number (PHN) (or if the patient is not willing or able to provide a PHN, the pseudo PHN of NX0000000 should be used)
- Client's full name (last and first name)
- Client's date of birth
- Client's gender
- DIN 02393034 (for the naloxone in the kit – Omega 0.4mg/mL)
- Quantity – 1 (only one kit may be dispensed at a time per client)
- Pharmacy license number
- Pharmacist Identification (ID) number and Reference code
- Prescriber Identification Number and Reference code (if it hasn't been prescribed, use your pharmacist ID number and reference code)
- Service date

The lot number of the naloxone in the THN kit should be recorded in the client record (for those that have provided their PHN) but does not need to be transmitted electronically with the claim.

Take Home Naloxone (THN) Kit Use Survey

Information provided to Health Link or via the THN Kit Use Survey is instrumental in understanding the impact of the THN Program.

When counseling on the use of THN kits, encourage clients to **call Health Link at 811** or complete the **THN Kit Use Survey** after a kit is used in order to share their experience. The THN kit survey can be found online at <https://survey.albertahealthservices.ca/naloxone>.

Pharmacists are also encouraged to offer the AHS 24 Hour Addictions Helpline (1-866-332-2322) to people receiving a kit.

When you have questions:

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at:

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area) • **403-294-4041** (Calgary and area) • **1-800-361-9632** (toll free)

FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area) • **FAX 1-877-305-9911** (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefacts and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims. Visit <https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php>

