



February 21, 2024

House Health & Government Operations Committee

House Bill 411- Public Health - Opioid Overdose Reversal Drugs - Standing Orders

POSITION: FAVORABLE

We are writing to support House Bill 411- Public Health - Opioid Overdose Reversal Drugs - Standing Orders. As Director of Operations of Recovery180, a 3.1 substance use treatment provider located in multiple sites in Maryland, we see firsthand the impact opioid use-related overdoses have on our community. Increasing access to opioid overdose reversal drugs will save lives and give more individuals an opportunity for recovery.

HB411 is designed to enhance the accessibility and autonomy in the use of opioid overdose reversal drugs. The bill mandates that licensed health care providers with prescribing authority must allow individuals the choice of any FDA-approved opioid reversal drug formulation when issuing a standing order. Key points of the bill include:

A standing order, as defined by the bill, is a written instruction for prescribing and dispensing an opioid overdose reversal drug approved by the FDA. This standing order can be issued by licensed health care providers who either work for the Department of Health or a local health department, or who have a written agreement with an authorized entity.

When issuing a standing order for an opioid reversal drug, the prescribing health care provider must allow individuals to choose any formulation of any opioid reversal drug that has been approved by the FDA. This provision aims to provide patients with greater control over their treatment options and ensure they have access to the most suitable medication for their needs.

Licensed health care providers who issue a standing order can delegate the dispensing of FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drugs to employees or volunteers of authorized entities, ensuring broader access to these life-saving medications.

Pharmacists are permitted to dispense FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drugs in accordance with a therapy management contract, further expanding access to these crucial treatments.

The bill is set to take effect on October 1, 2024, and represents a significant step towards improving public health responses to the opioid crisis by ensuring that individuals at risk of opioid overdose, or those in a position to assist someone at risk, have timely and unrestricted access to opioid overdose reversal drugs.

It is for these reasons that we politely ask for a favorable report on House Bill 411. Thank you.

Kind Regards,

Dr. John Kotz
Director of Operations, Recovery180