

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2024 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader - Revised**

Senate Bill 408

(Senator Klausmeier)

Finance

Health and Government Operations

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**Maryland Department of Health - Reports on Standing Orders and Opioid  
Overdose Reversal Drugs**

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This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to submit a report to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee by December 1 each year from 2024 through 2026 on (1) current opioid overdose reversal drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and (2) whether MDH has added each current FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drug to a standing order and, if not, the reason why any such drug has not been added.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** MDH can complete and submit the required reports using existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:**

*Overdose Response Program*

MDH's Overdose Response Program (ORP) allows for FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drugs to be offered to specified individuals – free of charge – by multiple providers, programs, and entities. Subject to the limitations of the State budget, MDH must

purchase and provide FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drugs, at no cost, to the entities who may provide the reversal drugs only if MDH provides them. MDH may authorize private or public entities to conduct education and training on opioid overdose recognition and response that includes (1) education on recognizing the signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose; (2) training on responding to an opioid overdose, including the administration of FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drugs; and (3) access to opioid overdose reversal drugs and the necessary supplies for the administration of the opioid overdose reversal drug. Individuals are not required to obtain the specified training and education on opioid overdose recognition and response from a private or public entity before a pharmacist may dispense an FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drug.

### *Standing Orders for Opioid Overdose Reversal Drugs*

A licensed health care provider with prescribing authority may prescribe and dispense an FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drug to an individual who is believed to be at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose or is in a position to assist the individual at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose. A health care provider may also prescribe and dispense an FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drug by issuing a standing order if the licensed health care provider (1) is employed by MDH or a local health department or (2) has a written agreement with an authorized private or public entity.

A licensed health care provider who issues a standing order may delegate the dispensing of an FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drug to an employee or volunteer of an authorized private or public entity in accordance with a written agreement between the delegating licensed health care provider and the authorized private or public entity that employs the employee or volunteer. A licensed health care provider with dispensing authority may also dispense an FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drug to any individual in accordance with a standing order that is issued by a licensed health care provider with prescribing authority as described above. A pharmacist may also dispense an FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal drug in accordance with a therapy management contract under the Health Occupations Article.

Maryland has a statewide standing order for opioid overdose reversal drugs that authorizes any Maryland-licensed pharmacist to dispense unlimited prescriptions and refills of naloxone and devices for its administration to any individual, as specified. A pharmacist must provide consultation with the individual regarding the naloxone dosage that is most appropriate, select and dispense two doses of naloxone, and provide directions for use. The standing order is set to expire June 30, 2024, at which time a new order will be issued. If a patient cannot afford naloxone or related copayments, or does not wish to use insurance coverage, pharmacists are instructed to refer them to ORP where they can obtain a naloxone kit free of charge.

## **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 411 (Delegate Kipke, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Association of County Health Officers; Department of Budget and Management; Maryland Department of Health; Maryland Insurance Administration; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 16, 2024  
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