



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 2, 2023

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

RE: HB 571 – Overdose Response Program - Opioid Overdose Reversal Drugs - Choice of Formulation and Dosage – Letter of Opposition

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of opposition for House Bill 571 (HB 571) – Overdose Response Program - Opioid Overdose Reversal Drugs - Choice of Formulation and Dosage. This bill requires that MDH provide Overdose Response Programs (ORPs) with the formulation and dosage of opioid overdose reversal drugs of the ORP's choosing.

MDH's Center for Harm Reduction Services currently purchases and provides local ORPs with opioid overdose reversal drugs, specifically naloxone, at no charge. Presently, ORPs can request any type of opioid overdose reversal drug from MDH. It should be noted that MDH conducts due diligence to obtain the best price for naloxone and pursue the most efficient procurement mechanism, in accordance with state procurement laws. MDH has a fixed budget for naloxone drug procurement, which is calculated based on cost and availability of the drugs. In addition, MDH has not received any feedback from ORPs about unmet community need for requested supplies.

For reference, current overdose reversal drugs (per two-dose kit) supplied through the ORPs are:

- Narcan nasal spray (4 mg);
- Kloxxado nasal spray (8 mg); and
- Naloxone injectable intramuscular (0.4 mg/mL).

MDH experiences the highest volume of requests for the Narcan nasal spray. If HB 571 is enacted, MDH will be required to honor ORP requests for higher priced naloxone formulations. Purchasing naloxone products without consideration of cost, will result in an unknown fiscal impact and may impact MDH's compliance with the STOP Act of 2022. In turn, this could limit MDH's goal to maximize naloxone saturation statewide.

If you would like to discuss this topic further, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Peters, Acting Director of Governmental Affairs at megan.peters@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary