

March 18, 2016

Dear New Mexico Pharmacist,

On Friday March 4, 2016, Governor Susana Martinez signed legislation to help improve access to naloxone. Senate Bill 262 (duplicates House Bill 277) allows licensed prescribers to prescribe, dispense, or distribute naloxone under a standing order.

Today, the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) issued a statewide standing order allowing all registered pharmacists in New Mexico to dispense naloxone to any person who is at risk for suffering an opioid overdose and to any person in a position to assist a person at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose. As respected and accessible health care providers, pharmacists are well positioned to substantially increase access to naloxone and promote opioid safety.

New Mexico had the second highest overdose death rate in the nation in 2014. The majority of overdose deaths involved heroin or a prescription opioid. The New Mexico Department of Health recognizes the complex and difficult nature of opioid dependence and addiction. Overdose prevention strategies must be wide-reaching and multifaceted. Expanding naloxone access is one of several overdose prevention strategies aimed at combating this major public health issue.

Attached to this letter is a copy of the NMDOH statewide standing order, a dispensing guide for pharmacists, and an educational handout for naloxone recipients. Additional information can be found at the NMDOH website at <http://nmhealth.org>. We will be having a conference call on Tuesday March 22, 2016 at 10:00am to answer questions about the new law and the standing order process. The conference call number is 1-888-205-5513; participant code 920155. Please contact Brianna Harrand at (505)476-3541 or Brianna.Harrand@state.nm.us for questions and information regarding the conference call. The New Mexico Department of Health thanks you for serving our communities and playing an essential role in our state's overdose prevention efforts.

Sincerely,



Michael Landen, M.D., MPH
State Epidemiologist