



Indian Health Service Press Statement

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IHS website: <http://www.ihs.gov>

IHS working with DOJ to prevent opioid overdose fatalities

The Indian Health Service (IHS) has partnered with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in the development of a Law Enforcement Naloxone Toolkit to help reduce the rate of fatalities from opioid overdoses in Indian Country. Naloxone is a potentially lifesaving drug known for effectively restoring breathing to a patient experiencing a heroin or other opioid overdose.

The IHS and other HHS agencies participated in a July 2014 Law Enforcement Naloxone Toolkit expert advisory panel meeting. The toolkit was released on October 27, 2014, and it is now available nationwide. The toolkit is being provided free to all interested tribal and IHS facilities.

Opioid overdoses can be fatal in 45 to 90 minutes. The IHS is encouraging health care providers from IHS, tribal, and urban facilities to work with law enforcement agencies to use the toolkit to help save patients. Law enforcement officers are often first on the scene of an overdose so their actions can mean the difference between life and death.

The toolkit was developed with guidance and input from IHS personnel. “This toolkit provides critical resources for us to partner with law enforcement to reduce fatalities from opioid overdoses,” said Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, acting IHS director.

The toolkit offers answers to frequent questions about Naloxone. It also contains sample documents and templates, such as data collection forms, standard operating procedures, training materials, press releases, community outreach materials, and memoranda of agreement between first responders and medical directors. The toolkit can be accessed at www.bja.gov/naloxone.

The IHS, an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives.



IHS Tucson Area EMS personnel and tribal law enforcement respond to an emergency.