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Executive Director

August 31, 2022
For Immediate Release

**DuPage County Health Department Launches
Lifesaving Narcan Vending Machine**

DuPage County – In recognition of International Overdose Awareness Day, today, August 31, the DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) is opening the county's first Narcan vending machine at the Linda A. Kurzawa Community Center (LKCC), located at 115 North County Farm Road in Wheaton. The Narcan vending machine is part of DCHD's efforts to reduce opioid-related overdose deaths by strategically expanding access to Narcan nasal spray. The new vending machine is easily accessible to all community members in the main lobby of the LKCC, which is the location for DCHD's Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Services.

"DuPage County has been working to save lives and prevent opioid overdose-related deaths through the DuPage Narcan Program (DNP) since 2013," said Dr. Richard Jorgensen, DuPage County Coroner. "For years we prioritized increasing access, training, and awareness of Narcan in DuPage, and this new vending machine is an exciting step forward."

The DuPage Narcan Program (DNP) serves as a vital resource in DuPage County to train individuals on the use of Narcan as well as provide supplies of Narcan to individuals who are more likely to witness an overdose. The trainings offered to the community provide an overview of the opioid epidemic in DuPage, and most importantly educate residents about how to recognize and respond to an overdose, and how to use the life-saving antidote Narcan. Narcan has been used over 1300 times to save a life through the DNP since 2013.

Naloxone (sometimes referred to as Narcan, its brand name) is an opioid antagonist that is used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose by restoring breathing and brain function, thereby saving the life of the person experiencing an opioid overdose. Naloxone can be administered by a nasal spray or an injection.

Naloxone only works if someone has opioids in their system and has no effect if opioids are not present. Naloxone has no potential for abuse, is completely legal, and has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Naloxone cannot make people high, and it is safe for nearly everyone. A person who is given Naloxone and regains consciousness still requires emergency medical help, which is why calling 911 is an important step in responding to an opioid overdose. ([Using Naloxone | HOPEDuPage, IL](#))

Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.



111 N. County Farm Rd., Wheaton, IL 60187

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The opioid crisis and the use of other drugs remain a priority public health concern in DuPage County. In 2021, DuPage County experienced a total of 137 total overdose deaths, a five percent increase from 2020. Additionally, 214 opioid-overdose reversals were performed with the use of Narcan by individuals participating in the DuPage Narcan Program.

“We must continue to ensure widespread access to Narcan, as every life lost to a drug overdose is one too many,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director of the DuPage County Health Department. “DCHD continues to support individuals with substance use disorder by providing them a path to long-term recovery.”

DCHD is a safety net provider of behavioral health and substance use disorder services for underserved residents in DuPage County. To learn more about our services, visit: <https://www.dupagehealth.org/172/Behavioral-Health>

Additional resources are available, including:

The Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances. If someone you know is suffering from an opioid use disorder or other substance use disorders, call the Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances at 1- 833-2FINDHELP to speak with a trained professional for support and advice or to be directed to customized resources or visit HelplineIL.org.

SAMHSA’s National Helpline. A confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365- day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.

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