



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
*Aging and Long-Term Support Administration*  
*PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600*

December 31, 2019  
**Amended January 15, 2020**

**AL TSA: NH #2019-030**  
**NURSING LICENSE NOT REQUIRED FOR USE OF OPIOID  
REVERSAL MEDICATION IN LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES**

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator

**UPDATE: Clarified with language around residents who have their own order for Naloxone and removed language regarding the POLST.**

Naloxone is a prescription medicine used for the emergency treatment of known or suspected opioid overdose. Naloxone is a prescription medicine that temporarily stops the effect of opioids.

In 2019, the Department of Health issued a statewide standing order in accordance with RCW 69.41.095(5), which authorized the use of Naloxone to any eligible person or entity. As a result, some nursing facilities have looked into storing Naloxone on their premises, and into administering to residents when appropriate.

This program is completely voluntary. If the Nursing Facility seeks to use the statewide standing order and purchase Naloxone:

- Naloxone can be administered by anyone. This task does **not** require a nurse.
- Nursing facilities are allowed to store Naloxone on their premises.
- Providers must have written policies and procedures on the proper response to an opioid-related overdose, and administering Naloxone.
- Written instructions are available at: [www.doh.wa.gov/naloxoneinstructions](http://www.doh.wa.gov/naloxoneinstructions).
- Nursing facilities should follow the informed consent process by ensuring staff members honor a resident's wish to not take certain medications.
- Staff members are shielded from civil or criminal liability if they acted in good faith when administering this drug.
- Entities seeking to use the statewide standing order to receive and dispense Naloxone must contact the Department of Health (DOH) by emailing [naloxoneprogram@doh.wa.gov](mailto:naloxoneprogram@doh.wa.gov). DOH will notify entities if any changes are made to the order.
- If a resident has a specific order for Naloxone, the facility must follow SNF/NF regulations regarding medications. However, Naloxone does not need to be administered by a nurse, it can be administered by anyone.

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Hoeman, Behavioral Health Policy Program Manager, at (360) 725-3210 or [debbie.hoeman@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:debbie.hoeman@dshs.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Candace Goehring, Director  
Residential Care Services

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