

14-0446

APR 09 2014

MOTION

PUBLIC SAFETY

Drug addiction is a disease and condition which can cripple lives and potentially lead to death. Opiates, such as heroin, are particularly devastating drugs with overdoses frequently becoming fatal.

An overdose occurs when an opiate is on the same receptor site in the brain that is used for breathing, and naloxone is a type of drug which displaces opiates from receptors in the brain. According to research, naloxone can allow slowed or absent breathing to resume, which can reverse the consequences of an overdose. The drug, administered nasally, is easy to use, requires minimal training, and is almost immediately effective. Research also indicates that naloxone is non-addictive and will not hurt a non-overdosing patient if mistakenly administered.

Naloxone has been in use by emergency room clinicians for several years and, recently, states across the country have explored an expanded use of naloxone for first responders in the field. Based on a 90 percent rise in heroin overdoses from 2000 to 2012, the Governor of Massachusetts declared a public health emergency and directed that all state police, firefighters, and emergency personnel be equipped with naloxone. After experiencing 47 opiate-related deaths in a 17-month period, one Massachusetts city equipped all police cruisers with naloxone and the number of related deaths in the following 17-month period was reduced to 16.

With the ability to save lives and reverse the fatal consequences of drug overdoses, the Fire Department, as the City's primary emergency medical provider, should report on the feasibility of integrating the use of naloxone into its response protocols.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Fire Department be instructed to report on the potential benefits and cautions for using naloxone in treating drug overdoses, as well as any costs associated with acquiring and maintaining an adequate supply of naloxone for this purpose.

PRESENTED BY 
PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District

SECONDED BY 

JD


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ORIGINAL