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Governor Baker Announces \$700,000 in Naloxone Grants for First Responders

Equips police and fire departments in 40 communities with resources to reverse opioid overdoses

BOSTON – Governor Charlie Baker and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced that \$700,000 will be awarded to police and fire departments in 40 communities heavily impacted by the Commonwealth’s opioid epidemic, facilitating the purchasing, carrying and administering of the opioid overdose reversal drug, naloxone.

“This grant will help save more lives as our administration continues to pursue new and wide-ranging tools to combat the opioid epidemic, including the ability for medical personnel to intervene with those who have overdosed,” **said Governor Baker**. “We look forward to continuing to work with the legislature to pass meaningful reforms, and are pleased to support our first responders’ access to immediate, life-saving resources.”

Last year as part of comprehensive recommendations from the Governor’s opioid working group, the administration established a bulk purchasing fund allowing first responders in municipal entities to access the state rate for naloxone purchases, and when available, receive an additional discount. Governor Baker has also [filed landmark legislation](#) to provide medical personnel with the power to intervene with patients suffering from addiction, control the spread of addictive prescription opioids and increase education about substance use disorder (SUD) for providers and in the community.

“Today’s announcement, along with the creation of the bulk purchasing fund, will increase the amount of naloxone available in hot-spot communities where it is needed most,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.** “These resources will help ease the costs of medication, enabling our firefighters and police officers to save more lives.”

Grants for \$10,000 to \$50,000 are being awarded to the following communities: *Attleboro, Barnstable, Beverly, Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Falmouth, Fitchburg, Framingham, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Medford, New Bedford, North Attleboro, Peabody, Pittsfield, Plymouth, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Saugus, Somerville, Springfield, Stoughton, Taunton, Waltham, Wareham, Westfield, Weymouth, Winthrop, Woburn, Worcester*

“There is no faster and more effective way to reverse an opioid overdose than to administer naloxone,” **said Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders.** “It is imperative we do everything we can to counteract the epidemic of opioid addiction by providing as many first responders as possible the opportunity to use this life-saving medication.”

“The use of naloxone is one of our state’s greatest success stories in the fight against the opioid epidemic,” **said DPH Commissioner Monica Bharel.** “This funding will allow more first responders in our hardest hit communities to have access to this safe, life-saving drug.”

Only municipalities that met the following criteria were eligible to apply:

- an average annual rate of 6.0 and above of unintentional/undetermined opioid overdose deaths per 100,000 and
- an average annual count of unintentional/undetermined opioid overdose deaths of 4.0 and above (2009-2013).

The award amounts were calculated by taking the total allocation (\$700,000) and dividing it among the applicants based on the population of the municipality.

The Baker-Polito Administration has already implemented many reforms aimed at curbing the Commonwealth’s opioid epidemic, including \$114 million in this year’s budget for substance abuse prevention and changes to the Prescription Monitoring Program’s reporting requirement. One hundred and thirteen treatment beds have opened in six communities (Quincy, Plymouth, New Bedford, Boston, Westborough, Fall River) with more expected in Greenfield this winter.

A full update on the Governor’s Opioid Working Group’s progress can be found at:

[www.mass.gov/statewithoutstigma.](http://www.mass.gov/statewithoutstigma)

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