

OPIOID ANTAGONISTS

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House Bill 4417 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Mike Mueller
Committee: Regulatory Reform
Revised 6-6-25

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4417 would amend the Public Health Code to require that if the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) distributes an *opioid antagonist* at no cost in Michigan, it must also provide opioid antagonists directly to a *life support agency* for the purpose of equipping a life support vehicle. The opioid antagonists would have to be provided at no cost upon the request of the life support agency.

Opioid antagonist means naloxone hydrochloride or any other similarly acting and equally safe drug approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of drug overdose.

Life support agency means an ambulance operation, nontransport prehospital life support operation, aircraft transport operation, or medical first response service licensed under Part 209 (Emergency Medical Services) of the code.

Proposed MCL 333.20911

BACKGROUND:

Naloxone hydrochloride is a nonaddictive drug that can safely and rapidly reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. (Among other substances, opioids include heroin, fentanyl, and such prescription drugs such as Vicodin, Dilaudid, Demerol, OxyContin, and Percocet.) Naloxone is most commonly known by the brand names Narcan (a nasal spray) and Evzio (a prefilled auto-injection device).¹ Administered to an individual whose breathing has slowed or stopped due to an opioid overdose, naloxone can quickly restore normal breathing. It has been approved as an over-the-counter medicine by the FDA.²

Michigan had 2,998 drug overdose deaths in 2022, and 2931 in 2023.³ It is estimated that 80% of those were opioid overdoses.⁴ At the national level, 81,083 people died of an opioid overdose in 2023. Health experts say that a third or more of opioid overdose deaths occur in the presence of someone else, implying that if more bystanders had more access to tools such as opioid antagonists, more lives could be saved.⁵ Accordingly, in response to the ongoing opioid epidemic, Michigan has taken steps to ensure that naloxone is more widely and readily

¹ Other nasal spray brand names include Rezenopy and RiVive.

² See <https://www.michigan.gov/opioids/find-help/naloxone-page>

³ <https://www.michigan.gov/opioids/category-data>

⁴ That percentage estimate is based on national and 2021 Michigan percentages.

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/overdose-prevention/reversing-overdose/>

available when needed.⁶ For example, DHHS oversees a web portal through which organizations and health providers can request naloxone kits to help in reducing the number of opioid-related overdoses by having naloxone available for use by their patients or clients or in their communities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4417 would increase state expenditures to the Department of Health and Human Services by an indeterminate amount and have no fiscal impact on local units of government. The fiscal impact of the bill would be dependent on the cost to DHHS to provide opioid antagonists for use by life support vehicles. Currently, hospitals within the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system supply life support vehicles with opioid antagonists. In prior fiscal years, opioid antagonists have been made available free of cost for organizations, hospitals, and jails that have requested them from the department. According to the department, 25,872 opioid antagonist kits have been distributed to local health departments and 252,180 kits have been distributed to other agencies such as community mental health providers, the Department of Corrections, and law enforcement agencies. The current price for opioid antagonist kits is \$29 per kit (around \$14.50 per dose).

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

⁶ For data on naloxone distribution, see page 8 of the 2023-24 Opioid Task Force Report:
<https://www.michigan.gov/opioids/-/media/Project/Websites/opioids/documents/OTF-docs/2023-2024-Opioids-Task-Force-Report.pdf>