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**MDHHS, MVAA collaborate with EMS to provide veteran-centric resources in the Leave Behind Naloxone Program**

**LANSING, Mich.** – LANSING, Mich. – In honor of Military Appreciation Month, two State of Michigan agencies are collaborating with emergency medical services (EMS) providers to provide veteran-centric resources within the [EMS Leave Behind Naloxone Program](#).

This program equips EMS providers with naloxone, the lifesaving opioid overdose reversal drug, to leave behind with the patient, family and friends or bystanders at the scene of a non-fatal overdose. With this new collaboration, these kits will also include information on veteran-centric resources that may assist veterans during their current situation.

The collaboration between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) furthers the state's efforts within the Governor's Challenge to prevent suicide and reduce opioid overdoses among service members, veterans and their families.

EMS providers are key partners for reaching individuals at the highest risk of overdose and it has been well established that the **more connected** veterans are to services (federal, state, and local) the lower their risk for self-harm including suicide or opioid overdose.

EMS providers can play a central role in removing barriers to accessing naloxone and increasing awareness of available veteran-centric resources by providing it directly to those present at the scene of an overdose.

“EMS providers are on the front lines every day witnessing the effects the opioid crisis has on Michiganders, and veterans and their families are not immune,” said MVAA Director Zaneta Adams. “We know our veteran population is affected by opioid overdoses and often lack the support they need to protect themselves and their loved ones. This partnership gets naloxone and other veteran-centric resources directly into the homes of those veterans who need it most.”

MDHHS continues to work with partners across the state to encourage adoption of the EMS Leave Behind Program protocol which is available in Michigan through funding from Vital Strategies for EMS-provider Narcan through an online naloxone portal.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has unfortunately exacerbated the opioid epidemic and having naloxone on hand can make the difference between someone living or dying from an overdose,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health at MDHHS. “This program will help prevent fatal overdose by distributing naloxone to people at highest risk as well as provide important information to our state’s veterans.”

For more information and resources, visit [Michigan.gov/Opioids](https://Michigan.gov/Opioids) and [Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency](https://Michigan.gov/VeteransAffairs) .

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