



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Home and Community Living Administration
P.O. Box 45600 • Olympia, Washington 98504

September 16, 2025
Amended January 29, 2026

HCLA: AFH #2025-038
HCLA: ALF #2025-036
HCLA: CCRSS #2025-019
HCLA: ESF #2025-024
HCLA: ICF/IID #2025-011

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES AND KEEPING NALOXONE (NARCAN) IN STOCK

Dear Provider/Administrator/Superintendent:

This Dear Provider Letter (DPL) supersedes DPLs AFH: #2019-020, ALF: #2019-019, CCRSS: 2019-009, ESF: #2019-009, and ICF/IID: #2019-009.

Residential Care Services (RCS) wants to remind facility providers of the importance of resident/client safety and having **naloxone** (a medication that rapidly reverses an opioid overdose) in long-term care facilities, including for those who are prescribed painkillers.

In 2019, the Department of Health (DOH) 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**. This [standing order was updated April 22, 2024](#). As a result, long-term care programs have participated in the naloxone standing order program and are administered to residents/clients when appropriate.

RCS strongly recommends keeping naloxone in the facility/home in an event of an emergency for when an opioid is prescribed or based on the history of the resident/client. A facility and its providers *are required to meet the needs of all of its residents/clients, including in emergency situations*. If the facility or its provider seeks to use the statewide standing order and purchase naloxone:

- Naloxone can be administered by anyone. This task does **not** require nurse delegation.
- Naloxone can be stored on the premises of a facility, home, or provider office.
- Agencies/facilities/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.
- Agencies/facilities/providers must follow the informed consent process by ensuring staff members honor a resident/client's wish not to take certain medications.
- Staff members are shielded from civil or criminal liability if they act in good faith when administering this drug.
- **While some forms of naloxone are over the counter, entities may use the statewide standing order to receive and dispense prescription naloxone, as needed. If there are questions about the standing order or about naloxone distribution, email DOH at naloxoneprogram@doh.wa.gov.**
- If a resident/client has a specific order for naloxone, the facility or provider must follow the specific facility entity regulations regarding medications. Facility/home requirements for naloxone's use and availability depend on the resident/client population, medications prescribed, negotiated service agreements/care plans/treatment plans, and emergency preparedness.

RCS Provider Letter: **LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES AND KEEPING NALOXONE (NARCAN) IN STOCK**

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Thank you for your continued commitment to resident/client health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact your local RCS Field Manager or RCSpolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services
DSHS: "Partnering with People"

Attachments: [Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution](#) (Department of Health Resource)