



Policy Manual – Student Miscellaneous

S.M.21 Opioid Overdose

The mission of Catholic Education in Hamilton-Wentworth, in union with our Bishop, is to enable all learners to realize the fullness of humanity of which Our Lord Jesus Christ is the model.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSD) that each elementary and secondary school, as well as HWCDSD adult continuing education sites, and HWCDSD administration buildings within its jurisdiction shall have an Opioid Overdose Management Plan. In HWCDSD secondary schools, in HWCDSD adult continuing education sites, and in HWCDSD locations where it is known that opioid medication has been prescribed, they shall have an Opioid Overdose Management Plan which describes the procedures for the effective use of Naloxone nasal spray at the time of an opioid overdose.

To accomplish this objective, the HWCDSD shall make every reasonable effort to:

- ensure that school board personnel are aware of the signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose; and,
- outline the procedures necessary to respond effectively to an opioid overdose.

Purpose

Opioids are a class of drugs used primarily to treat pain. However, opioids' euphoric effects paired with their pain relieving qualities can lead to dependence, overdose and possibly death.

Some of the most commonly prescribed opioids are:

- Codeine;
- Fentanyl (in patches only);
- Hydromorphone (e.g. Dilaudid);
- Medical Heroin;
- Methadone;
- Morphine; and,
- Oxycodone (e.g. Endocet, Percocet)

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (2019) indicates that 11.0% of students in Grades 7 – 12 report using a prescription opioid pain reliever without a prescription in the previous year.

The risk of overdose when using opioids without a prescription is always present. The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (2017) reports that Emergency Department visits to Ontario hospitals due to opioid poisoning increased from 14.2 for every 100,000 population in 2010-11 to 17.4 for every 100,000 population in 2014-15. The Hamilton Opioid Information System of the City of Hamilton, Ontario indicates that paramedics responded to 596 suspected opioid overdoses in 2019. This compares to 450 in 2018 and 437 in 2017.

Naloxone (also known by the brand name Narcan) is an opioid antagonist used for the complete or partial reversal of an opioid overdose. Naloxone is available in three forms:

- Injectable – normally used by medical professionals (e.g. physicians, nurses);
- Auto injectable – normally used by families and emergency personnel (e.g. paramedics); and,
- Prepackaged nasal spray – normally used by non-medical personnel, including appropriately trained school staff.

Only prepackaged nasal spray will be provided in designated HWCDSB sites for administration in event of a suspected opioid overdose.

In addressing the needs of students who have experienced an opioid overdose, the HWCDSB has two primary objectives:

- to support students to fully access school in a safe, accepting and healthy learning environment which enhances their mental, physical and spiritual well-being; and,
- to empower students, as confident and capable learners, to reach their full potential for self-management of their medical condition.

Responsibility

Secondary School Principals, Superintendents of Education

Regulations

Education Act, 1990 - Section 264 – Duties of Teacher & Section 265 – Duties of Principal
Regulation 298 – Operation of Schools – General - Section 11 – Duties of Principals & Section 20 – Duties of Teachers
Regulation Made Under the Teaching Profession Act - Section 14 (f)
Good Samaritan Act, 2001

Related Policies

S.M.04 – Accidents and Illnesses in the School
S.M.20 Administration of Prescribed Medication

Related Board Committee

Committee of the Whole

Policy Review Date

BM Original Policy Approved: 23 March 2021

Revisions:

To be reviewed every three years