

Government consults on increasing access to lifesaving overdose medicine

- Consultation launched to make naloxone more widely available in the community
- Police officers, paramedics, prison officers and pharmacists could administer the medicine across the UK
- The treatment can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and prevent drug-related deaths

A lifesaving medicine which can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose could be available to more frontline workers under new plans to tackle record high drug-related deaths.

A consultation has been launched today [Tuesday 3 August] to amend current regulations in order to allow naloxone to be supplied and administered by a wider group of people regularly coming into contact with drug users.

Police officers, prison officers, paramedics and pharmacists are among the professions that would be given access to the drug able to help save the lives of people suffering an overdose.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid said:

Drug misuse destroys lives and has a devastating impact on people's health, their livelihoods and their families.

To prevent people dying from drug abuse we need to make sure the right treatment and medicines are available, which is why we're launching this consultation on naloxone today.

This Government is committed to tackling drug misuse and saving lives, including through our new Joint Combating Drugs Unit and an ambitious new strategy.

Drug related deaths have doubled since 2012 with the latest statistics showing record numbers of opiate-related deaths across the United Kingdom.

This 8 week consultation comes after the government launched a new Joint Combating Drugs Unit and committed to publish an ambitious new drug strategy later this year to tackle drug misuse across society.

This commitment was made in response to Dame Carol Black's landmark independent review on drugs.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Drugs destroy lives, ruin families, and tear apart communities and we are doing everything in our power to stop this poisonous cycle and help people to turn their lives around.

Allowing police officers and other frontline workers to carry naloxone would mean more lives are saved from this terrible scourge and I am delighted to support the Health and Social Care Secretary in this work as part of a whole of government effort to drive down drug misuse.

At the same time we will continue to clamp down on criminal gangs by actively disrupting supply chains which fuel illegal markets, support people through treatment and recovery and rid communities of the harm drug misuse causes.

Currently, while naloxone can be legally administered by anyone during an emergency, its supply is tightly controlled and is only available through prescription.

Aside from an emergency situation, it is only commissioned drug treatment services that are able to obtain, and supply naloxone to individuals without a prescription or other written authorisation. This consultation seeks to change that.

The services and individuals that would be eligible to hold and give naloxone are:

- police officers
- prison officers
- probation officers
- registered nurses
- paramedics
- midwives
- pharmacists
- outreach and day services for people who experience homelessness
- temporary and supported accommodation services for substance users and people who experience homelessness

The proposed legislative changes would apply throughout the United Kingdom and this consultation is being made available in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

It will seek views on the viability of these proposals, as well as suggestions from stakeholders of any more individuals or services that should also be included in the list.

- The consultation has now been [published](#)
- The government [responded](#) to the Dame Carol Black review last week
- Dame Carol will advise the government on the development and delivery of a new drug strategy – to be published by the end of the year– which will set out a full response to her review recommendations. The strategy will take a genuinely cross-government approach to tackle the supply and

demand for illegal drugs simultaneously.