



Subject: Narcan (Naloxone) use by Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services

To: Council

From: Community Safety & Enforcement Department

Report Number: 2021-226

Meeting Date: September 13, 2021

Recommendation:

That Community Safety & Enforcement report 2021-226 be received;

That Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to complete the Memorandum of Understanding with the Regional Municipality of Niagara for the use of Narcan (Naloxone) by Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services; and

That Council direct the Fire Chief to enroll Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services into the Ontario Provincial Naloxone Program and train all personnel in the use of Narcan (Naloxone) for responses to opioid overdoses.

Purpose:

The Fire Chief is requesting authorization from City Council to enroll in the Ontario Provincial Naloxone Program. A Memorandum of Understanding with the Regional Municipality of Niagara also needs to be executed. This will allow Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services to train in the awareness of opioid risks, protection, patient care, as well as be permitted to carry and administer Naloxone as a life-saving medical intervention.

Background:

Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services currently responds to emergency medical responses as per the Establishing and Regulating By-law 6745/109/19 and the Tiered Response Agreement with Niagara Region Emergency Medical Service.

Historically, Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services responds to between 400 and 450 medical calls a year. Trend analysis shows a rapid increase in medical responses that are overdose-related. Given the increased risks to citizens and responders due to overdose calls, it is recommended that Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Service personnel be trained to carry and administer Naloxone, as required.

Discussion:

Opioids are natural or synthetic substances used to reduce pain in clinical settings; they are also produced and consumed non-medically. While they can be an effective part of pain management for some medically supervised patients, opioid-related harms such as addiction and overdose present a significant challenge to Ontario communities.

Ontario is currently facing an epidemic related to opioid use, with an increase in emergency room visits, hospitalizations and fatal overdoses. Opioids affect the part of the brain that controls breathing. Strong opioids, like fentanyl, are contaminating the illegal drug supply and causing high rates of overdoses and death.

Naloxone is a safe and effective medication used to temporarily block the effects of opioids overdoses. It is an essential tool in preventing fatal opioid overdoses. Due to its high potency, multiple doses of Naloxone may be needed to treat a fentanyl overdose. Naloxone temporarily blocks the effects of respiratory depression caused by opioids for 30-90 minutes. Medical attention is still required following its administration.

Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services has seen a steady increase in drug-related medical responses over the last five years. To date, staff have already responded to 43 suspected overdose incidents in 2021; that is almost double the total responses for overdose-related medical calls the department responded to in 2017.

Year	Medical Calls	Overdose related	Percentage of Calls
2017	424	23	5.4%
2018	487	27	5.5%
2019	403	31	7.7%
2020	98 (COVID protocols)	18	18.4%
2021 as of Aug 15	151	43	28.4%

Given the increased risk to not only the general public but also first responders, staff recommends that Naloxone be added to Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services' medical response.

Financial Implications:

The Province of Ontario supplies first responders with Narcan (Naloxone) kits through the Ontario Provincial Naloxone Program at no cost to the participating emergency services.

The majority of training of all responding suppression staff should be able to be completed during regular training hours. No increase in training cost is anticipated.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Service and Simplicity - Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services
 - People: Supporting and Investing in Human Capital
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Conclusion:

With an increasing volume of medical calls for assistance in opioid overdose in the community, Staff feel it is appropriate to add Naloxone protocols to the fire department's response. This service provides added protection, not only to the citizens and visitors of the City, but to the first responders that can come into contact with opioid residues.

Appendices:

- a. Memorandum of Understanding with Regional Municipality of Niagara
- b. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care - Supplemental Order Form: Naloxone for Police and Fire Services

Respectfully submitted,

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Fire Chief

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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.