



# NEWS



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**McLean County Health and Sheriff's Departments Partner to Combat Opioid- Related Deaths**  
*Health department providing funds for a one-year supply of the anti-opiate antidote Narcan*

**BLOOMINGTON, IL-** The McLean County Health Department is providing funding for a one year supply, or 24 doses, of Narcan to the McLean County Sheriff's Department. Narcan is a life-saving anti-opiate antidote used to counter the effects of opioid overdose. The health department funding for the purchase of Narcan will assist the Sheriff's Department with establishing their Narcan program during fiscally tight budgetary times.

In accordance with Illinois Public Act 099-0480, law enforcement officers are now required to carry the antidote as part of the Act's Drug Overdose Response Policy which seeks to ensure that the antidote is administered quickly to individuals suffering from an overdose from heroin or prescription opiates. The Narcan purchased with the health department funding is enough to outfit each of the County Sheriff Department's front-line patrol vehicles.

"The McLean County Health Department and the McLean County Sheriff's Department have a common goal to protect the well-being of the people who live in our communities," explains Walt Howe, Director of the McLean County Health Department. Adding, "With the recent rise in opioid-related deaths in Illinois, Narcan has become an important tool for members of law enforcement to use on the front lines. It has been proven to be successful in saving lives; thus, providing overdose victims a second chance to seek treatment for their addiction. Whenever possible we will support efforts that save lives and get people into substance abuse programs to help them overcome their drug dependency."

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Sheriff Jon Sandage expects officers to receive training on administering the Narcan nasal spray and begin carrying it in their patrol cars within the next 30 days. Says Sandage, “We greatly appreciate the McLean County Health Department and its Board of Health for their support and for helping us put a critical live-saving tool in the hands of law enforcement. Time is of the essence in overdose situations and the sooner we can attempt to counteract the effects of an opioid overdose, the better chance we have of saving a life.”

Together, the health department and the sheriff’s department hope they can save lives with Narcan. The community plays a role too and is reminded that Illinois has a law that offers protection to those who seek medical assistance for another person who is believed to be experiencing an overdose from consuming intoxicating liquor, or any drug or substance. Information from the McLean County Coroner’s Office shows there were 11 deaths related to opioids in 2015 and there have been another three deaths so far this year.

For more information about the health department’s partnership with the sheriff’s department, please call the McLean County Health Department at (309) 888-5489 or the McLean County Sheriff’s Department at (309) 888-5034.

The McLean County Health Department is dedicated to the prevention and control of disease through health promotion, early intervention and health protection within our county. “Like” McLeanHealth on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter, for information about public health affecting you.

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