



MEDIA RELEASE

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917-6413

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Katharine Killen
865-215-5534 office
865-755-1121 cell

March 11, 2019

In support of coalition, KCHD releases report on naloxone deployment

Knoxville, Tenn. — In support of the Harm Reduction Coalition, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) has released its second report on naloxone deployment by first responders. The report compiles naloxone deployment data from AMR Rural/Metro Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Fire, the Knoxville Fire Department, and Knoxville Police Department from October 2016 to September 2018. The Harm Reduction Coalition is studying naloxone deployment and releasing the findings to help both the coalition and the larger community better understand the substance misuse epidemic.

“It’s crucial that we have comprehensive data and that we use it to inform how we address this devastating issue, only then can we develop a more targeted and effective response,” said KCHD Director Dr. Martha Buchanan. “While the information in this report will help advance our efforts and those of our partners, it’s important to note that these findings are just the tip of the iceberg. There are likely many, many more people in our community suffering from substance use disorders.”

Several notable findings outlined in the report include:

- An average of 114 individuals received naloxone each month, an average of four a day.
- White males ages 25 to 39 received naloxone most frequently.
- Since 2017, the number of individuals receiving naloxone increased by 7.7 percent.
- While nearly 90 percent of individuals received the medication once in the span of 24 months, 10.7 percent required the medication on more than one occasion.

The Harm Reduction Coalition will explore new avenues for naloxone to be provided to those within high-risk, high-need areas of the community, as significant evidence supports this as an effective intervention to help address the epidemic. The first naloxone deployment report was released in 2018. Similar assessments will be released in the future. Naloxone is administered by first responders when a person is suspected of overdosing on opioids. The medication provides partial or complete reversal of an opioid overdose. Individuals who received naloxone at area hospitals and those who have obtained naloxone through a prescription are not included in this data set.

A PDF of the report is available on KCHD’s website [here](#). The data for this report was compiled and analyzed by KCHD Lead Epidemiologist Roberta Sturm and Epidemiologist Becky Meyer. KCHD epidemiology staff routinely gather, analyze and report data on current and emerging health issues that affect our community.

About Knox County Health Department

As the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. KCHD investigates disease outbreaks, identifies community health threats, conducts extensive outreach and education, provides and connects the public with medical care, prepares for public health emergencies, enforces food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

###

