



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAMS

December 15, 2014

Dear Healthcare Provider,

In September 2014, Act 139 was signed into law. Among other provisions, this statute makes it permissible for healthcare providers to write third party prescriptions for the overdose antidote medication, naloxone. That is to say, an individual who has a family member or loved one who may be at risk of an opioid overdose may obtain a prescription for naloxone in his or her own name to administer to that loved one in the event of an overdose. It is also permissible for pharmacies to fill such prescriptions. In addition to allowing the prescribing and filling of such prescriptions, it allows immunities for physicians who make naloxone accessible to individuals in this manner.

Details about Act 139 can be found at the following website locations:

www.health.state.pa.us

www.ddap.pa.gov

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2014&sessInd=0&act=139>

The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs' website also contains educational and awareness materials for those wishing to access and potentially administer naloxone. While it is not necessary for a family member to receive a prescription for naloxone, the website includes an online training for bystanders on how to recognize an opioid overdose and how to administer naloxone. This is not meant to preclude the instruction and information that a family member would obtain from his or her physician or pharmacist.

While the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Medical Society, the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, and others have made attempts to disseminate information about Act 139 and its provisions, not every healthcare provider may be aware this new law. For this reason, this letter has been made accessible to members of the public who may need assistance in further clarifying this information to prescribers and pharmacies. Hopefully, this correspondence will serve as a conduit for information sharing and the resources that can be found at the above websites will serve as additional resources as you serve your patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary Tennis".

Gary Tennis