



1st July 2024

Thomas Gould, TD
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

PQ Ref: 27393/24

To ask the Minister for Health the target for peer training and family training in naloxone provision annually

Dear Deputy Gould,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above representation which you submitted. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

The HSE is responsible for delivering action 2.2.30 b) *Expanding the availability of naloxone to people who use drugs, their peers and family members to reduce drug harm*, under the National Drug & Alcohol Strategy. Opioid Overdose Awareness and Naloxone Administration Training for people who use drugs, their peers and family members is a priority for the naloxone programme for the HSE and our partner services, and training data is collated by the HSE National Social Inclusion Office, please find data breakdown below:

- **2022** - services shared data for facilitating training for 141 peers and family members they support, of which 60 were provided with naloxone.
- **2023** - services shared data for facilitating training for 798 peers and family members they support, of which 773 were provided with naloxone.
- **2024 (to date)** - services have shared data for facilitating training for 475 peers and family members they support, of which 467 have been provided with naloxone.

In addition to the above, in 2023 to help empower families impacted by a loved one's substance use to recognise and respond to drug-related overdose the HSE co-ordinated two live webinars. Recordings of the 'Families Matter' webinars are available for viewing at: www.drugs.ie/FamiliesMatter The HSE supports the process to enhance access to naloxone, particularly for family members. This may require some amendments to legislation which are outside the remit of the HSE.

The HSE in collaboration with partner support services has launched sixteen Circle programmes across Ireland. The Circle Programme is a peer skills and education programme to support people who use drugs to understand overdose risks, take steps to prevent overdose and manage effectively if they are around someone who is overdosing. Each Circle programme is co-facilitated and managed by thirty partner services staff members facilitating training sessions for up to 128 peers across Ireland, who after graduation will volunteer for up to six months as Peer to Peer Overdose Prevention Workers within their communities. Our partner services are in the process of facilitating their Circle programmes.

The HSE's Opioid Overdose Awareness and Naloxone Administration Training blended course launched on HSeLanD at the end of January 2024. This course is open to all HSeLanD users and designed for all frontline workers (clinical and non-clinical) and volunteers who may witness an opioid overdose. To date 1109 learners have completed Module 1 of which 196 are volunteers.

The HSE created naloxone information resources including two demonstration videos which are available on drugs.ie through this link: www.drugs.ie/resources/naloxone. The videos demonstrate how to recognise, intervene and respond to an opioid overdose, including the administration of naloxone. The two videos were updated in August 2023 to include the reintroduction of rescue breaths and have been viewed 1641 times since then.

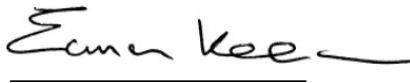
The naloxone street art mural on Parnell Street, Dublin 1, was created by the HSE in April 2023 to increase public awareness of opioid overdose and naloxone resources awareness by directing members of the public to the two demonstration videos on drugs.ie via the QR code on the mural.

The HSE collaborated with the Irish Prison Service in August 2023 to display naloxone banners at the visitor's entrance to each prison to raise awareness by directing visitors including family members to the two demonstration videos on drugs.ie via the QR code embedded in them.

In summary, there has been substantial progress by the HSE and partner services to expand the provision of training and availability of naloxone to peers and family members who might witness an opioid overdose.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eamon Keenan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Prof. Eamon Keenan
National Clinical Lead – Addiction Service

