



PRESS RELEASE

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SARATOGA COUNTY LAUNCHES NALOXBOX PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (SPAC)

Boxes will Make Naloxone Available to Event Patrons at Key Locations Throughout SPAC

Saratoga County, NY- Saratoga County officials today announced the Saratoga County Department of Health's launch of a NaloxBox Program in partnership with Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC). The program aims to address the opioid overdose crisis by providing public access to Naloxone, a life-saving medication that can reverse an opioid overdose.

Inspired by the life-saving concept of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), the NaloxBox serves as a public emergency intervention tool that houses multiple prepackaged doses of nasal naloxone spray. Like an AED, bystanders can freely access the box and its contents to help save the life of someone experiencing an opioid overdose.

Saratoga County Board of Supervisors Chairman Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr. said, "We've made fighting the opioid epidemic a top priority here in Saratoga County. The NaloxBox program is another example of what the county is doing as part of our education, prevention, treatment, and response efforts to mitigate the growing influence of drugs and addiction in our communities. We are thankful to our partners at SPAC for their support and use of this important program that empowers people to save lives."

Health and Human Services Committee Chair and Clifton Park Supervisor Phil Barrett said, "This collaborative effort between Saratoga County and SPAC reinforces the County's commitment to combatting the opioid crisis, working alongside valued partners like SPAC and the entire community. By raising awareness of opioid use and providing those who live and visit Saratoga County the tools necessary to intervene effectively during an opioid overdose, we can help save lives."

SPAC has installed four NaloxBoxes within its premises. These NaloxBoxes are placed in the venue's restrooms located in The Pines building and The Pinecones building. With these NaloxBoxes in place, this initiative will play a crucial role in increasing public access to Naloxone and providing SPAC's patrons the tools necessary to assist during potential medical emergencies arising from opioid overdoses.

(more)

Commissioner of the Saratoga County Department of Health, Daniel Kuhles, M.D., M.P.H., said, “Similar to national and state trends, Saratoga County regrettably continues to witness alarming rates of opioid-related overdoses and deaths. The data highlight the urgency of enhancing access to opioid overdose response tools such as NaloxBoxes. Community partnerships, like this one with SPAC, allows us to make naloxone available where and when it may be needed.”

Elizabeth Sobol, President and CEO of Saratoga Performing Arts Center said, “We applaud our colleagues at the County for the work they are doing to mitigate the growing influence of drugs and addiction in our communities, and we are glad to be partnering with them on these potentially life-saving measures.”

The Saratoga County Department of Health’s distribution of NaloxBoxes to SPAC is the first step in the County’s larger NaloxBox distribution program.

Saratoga County is utilizing its Department of Health’s Substance Use Surveillance System for a data driven approach to identify optimal locations for NaloxBox placements throughout Saratoga County. The County’s Department of Health will distribute a total of 35 NaloxBoxes to community organizations, businesses, and towns for installation in public spaces countywide. The program’s cost of \$9,134 was paid for with Opioid Settlement Funds.

To date in 2023, there have been 30 drug-related overdose fatalities in Saratoga County, a 30% increase from this time in 2022. Additionally in 2023, the 12866 zip code (Saratoga Springs), has experienced 109 non-fatal and fatal drug-related overdoses. To view real-time substance use surveillance data, visit the Saratoga County Substance Use Surveillance Dashboard at <https://savealifeto.day>.

Naloxone, sold under the brand name Narcan, is a safe medication that can save someone’s life by reversing the effects of an opioid overdose. It only works on opioids, such as heroin, prescription pain medications and fentanyl, but it is safe to use even if opioids are not present. 911 should always be called after administering Naloxone. New York State’s Good Samaritan Law allows people to call 911 without fear of arrest if they are having a drug overdose that requires emergency medical care or if they witness someone overdosing.

Saratoga County has received approximately \$1,156,700. in Opioid Settlement Funds since last year and has dedicated its use to a multi-agency approach between the Saratoga County Department of Health, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Sheriff’s Office to provide prevention, education, treatment and response services and programs to fight the effects of the opioid epidemic in our communities.

For more information about Saratoga County’s efforts to combat the opioid crisis, visit the Department of Health webpage at www.saratogacountyny.gov.

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Naloxbox Photos:

Photo Caption: A NaloxBox installed at SPAC



Photo Caption: A NaloxBox

