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## **ACCM's Statement on Opioid Overdose Prevention**

As the number of opioid overdoses continues to rise across the country, ACCM believes that community organizations play a pivotal role in overdose prevention.

**We acknowledge that there is a growing need for accessible naloxone in our communities. As such, ACCM wholeheartedly lends our voice to the rising demand that community organizations be given the ability to distribute naloxone kits.**

We are heartened by the news released today by Health Minister Gaétan Barrette and Public Health Minister Lucie Charlebois stating that as of tomorrow November 10<sup>th</sup> Quebec pharmacies will be able to give out free naloxone kits (up to eight doses) to people over the age of 14 with Quebec health insurance cards, and in special cases to uninsured persons (ex. persons in need of urgent care, street-involved persons, persons from outside of Quebec who show a passport).

However, we are concerned that naloxone kits will only be available at select pharmacies (to be posted on the [DRSP website](#)). We are also concerned that the requirement to present oneself at a pharmacy in order to receive a naloxone kit continues to pose a barrier to those most at risk. Moreover, we are troubled by accounts of discrimination experienced at local pharmacies.

**We therefore urgently call upon the DRSP to mitigate the barriers to accessing this life-saving drug at a time when our communities are in critical need, i.e. provide adequate and appropriate harm reduction training for front line health workers and emergency respondents.**

In keeping with our harm reduction approach, ACCM has taken action to equip our staff with the prevention knowledge and tools needed to respond to opioid overdoses, such as:

- Sending staff members from ACCM's education for prevention and support services programs to training sessions at the DRSP;
- Holding a capacity building session on administering naloxone for all staff;
- Equipping ACCM's drop-in space and outreach workers with naloxone kits;
- Outreach to local pharmacies to foster a better response to the crisis.

ACCM is committed to opioid overdose prevention, and encourages anyone with questions about access to naloxone to speak to an ACCM staff member.



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**For more information, consult the DRSP's news release:**

<http://www.newswire.ca/fr/news-releases/le-gouvernement-du-quebec-confirme-la-gratuite-de-la-naloxone-des-le-10-novembre-656374833.html>

**DRSP Page on Naloxone:**

[http://www.dsp.santemontreal.qc.ca/dossiers\\_thematiques/infections\\_et\\_intoxications/thematiques/naloxone\\_communautaire/problematique.html](http://www.dsp.santemontreal.qc.ca/dossiers_thematiques/infections_et_intoxications/thematiques/naloxone_communautaire/problematique.html)