



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free NARCAN® Vending Machine Now Available at Beloit Public Library

BELOIT, WI – Thanks to the collaboration of several agencies and a \$50,000 grant from the state’s Opioid Settlement Funds, Beloit now has access to free NARCAN® and fentanyl test strips via a vending machine located at Beloit Public Library.

Installed today, this is Rock County’s second such machine; the first was installed at the Rock County Jail in December.

This effort is the result of collaboration between Rock County Public Health Department, Vivent Health, and Beloit Public Library and is intended to help the community navigate an increase in deaths due to drug overdoses. Since January 1 of this year, there have been a total of 19 suspected fatal overdoses recorded in Rock County – 12 of them in Beloit. The number of non-fatal overdoses in the county during that same time is 129.

“Overdose deaths are preventable,” stated Katrina Harwood, Health Officer for Rock County. “Each overdose death leaves a lasting impact on family members, friends, and communities. We are grateful for the partnership with Beloit Public Library and Vivent Health to increase access to live-saving resources in Rock County.”

NARCAN®, a name-brand version of naloxone, is the only medicine on the market that can reverse an opioid overdose. Especially in its nasal form, NARCAN® is easy and safe to use. It can quickly restore normal breathing to a person if their breathing has slowed or stopped because of an opioid overdose. There is no harm if NARCAN® is administered to someone who isn't overdosing.

To access the NARCAN® and test strips from the machine, a person simply types in the code next to an item, and the item drops down in the tray below. No money is required, nor is the

input of any identifying information. Instructions for administration of the antidote are available both in an easy-to-read graphic and in a two-minute video accessible through a QR code. Spanish instructions are available in addition to English.

Users of the machine can choose whether to participate in an anonymous, 30-second survey that will help provide additional feedback regarding the process and the service.

“This Narcan vending machine will be an important harm reduction tool in Beloit,” said Brooke McKearn, prevention specialist at Vivent Health. “I am proud to be a part of this process coming to life.”

Until now, the Beloit community did not have easy access to these products. Obtaining it required a prescription and/or an appointment. With the number of overdoses escalating, residents needed quick and easy access to NARCAN® in an easily accessible location. Beloit Public Library volunteered to be that location.

Centrally located in the City of Beloit on a public bus route, the library is handicap-accessible and open 62 hours each week. It is a judge-free zone where anyone and everyone is welcomed. Roughly 475 visitors enter each day from a variety of ideologies, backgrounds, socioeconomics, ethnicities, religions, professions, family structures, and more.

The vending machine will be located inside the library’s gallery near the front of the building and will be accessible any time the library is open: 9:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday through Saturday. On weekdays, the front doors are unlocked early at 7:00 a.m. to provide access to the bathrooms, Blender Café, and gallery where the vending machine will be located.

Anyone who has a loved one who uses opioids is encouraged to have these products on hand in case of an accidental overdose. For more information about the NARCAN® vending machine, see our FAQs. For help and treatment for addictions, contact the Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline, a statewide resource for finding treatment services and recovery supports. It is a free service that is available 24/7. Call 211 or 833-944-4673.

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