

## **Governor Christie's Commitment To Saving Lives**

*Efforts To Reduce Overdose Deaths In New Jersey Have Led To Nearly 11,000 Deployments Of Narcan*

---

As part of the Administrations broader efforts to change the conversation on drug addiction and focus on treatment for those struggling with addiction, Governor Christie has made saving lives a priority through the implementation of programs dedicated to preventing drug overdose deaths.

### **[FLASHBACK VIDEO: Governor Christie: Treatment Is Impossible For Someone Who's Died](#)**



### **The Governor's Commitment To Reclaiming Lives Has Been A Top Priority Since The Earliest Days Of His Administration**

**Signed Bipartisan Overdose Protection Act Into Law:** In May 2013, fulfilling his commitment to emphasize drug rehabilitation efforts and his different approach to dealing with drug abuse and addiction, Governor Chris Christie signed the bipartisan Overdose Protection Act into law at a drug rehabilitation center in Paterson.

- The legislation takes a two-prong approach to help prevent drug overdose deaths in New Jersey. First, it provides legal protection to people who are in violation of the law while they are attempting to help a drug overdose victim. Secondly, it eliminates negative legal action against

health care professionals or bystanders who administer overdose antidotes in life-threatening situations.

**Expansion of the Overdose Prevention Act:** In February 2015, Governor Christie signed an expansion of the Overdose Prevention Act, adding a provision to extend the immunity provisions of the law to first responders including police and EMTs who administer and dispense Narcan.

**Statewide Expansion of Narcan Program To Save Lives From an Overdose:** Governor Christie implemented a statewide program to help reduce the number of heroin-related deaths by training and equipping police officers and first responders to administer the antidote Narcan to overdose victims. Since 2014, there have been nearly **11,000 deployments** of Narcan statewide.

**Establishing An Opioid Overdose Prevention Program To Expand The Success Of Narcan:** Building on Governor Christie's statewide expansion of the Narcan antidote program, the DHS Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services laid the groundwork for the Opioid Overdose Prevention Program. This program provides education to those at risk of an overdose, as well as their friends and family, and trains individuals to recognize an opiate overdose and to subsequently provide life-saving rescue measures using Narcan to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

- From the time the regionalized Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP) began in November 2015 through the end of March 2016, 1,421 individuals have been trained to administer Narcan and 1,111 naloxone kits have been distributed during 131 DMHAS-funded trainings throughout the state.

**Recovery Coaches Program:** In September 2015, as a direct result of the Facing Addiction Task Force's work, Governor Chris Christie announced the "Recovery Coaches" Program as another important step to getting help to overdose victims. The "Recovery Coaches" Program utilizes Recovery Specialists and Patient Navigators to engage individuals reversed from an opioid overdose to provide non-clinical assistance, recovery supports and appropriate referrals for assessment and substance use disorder treatment. Recovery Coaches are currently operating and serving those in need in Monmouth, Ocean, and Camden Counties. The program will soon be fully functioning in Essex and Passaic counties, as well. In his Fiscal Year 2017 budget address, Governor Christie announced an allocation of \$1.7 million in funding for the expansion of the Recovery Coaches Program into six additional counties.