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Governor Christie Announces Agreement To Secure Discounts On Life-Saving Overdose Antidote For New Jersey First Responders

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Drug Manufacturer To Cap Prices And Provide Rebates On Narcan Kits Deployed Over 1000 Times In 2014 Alone

Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie announced today that police departments and other public first responder entities can now purchase the life-saving opiate antidote Naloxone at a significant discount through an agreement negotiated with the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General and drug manufacturer Amphastar Pharmaceuticals, Inc. The agreement today helps secure the affordability and availability of Naloxone kits to New Jersey law enforcement and first responders, who deployed the kits over 1000 times in 2014, helping lead to the first decline in overdose deaths in New Jersey in the last four years.

New Jersey becomes the third state to obtain a contractual commitment from California-based Amphastar to provide rebates on Naloxone-related purchases, and to cap its prices. Effective June 1, Amphastar will provide a rebate for each Amphastar Naloxone syringe purchased by a law enforcement agency or other public entity in New Jersey. The negotiated rate amounts to a nearly 20 percent discount per syringe (\$6), as the average cost of a single syringe is \$29. In addition, Amphastar has agreed to essentially cap the price it charges New Jersey law enforcement and public first responders for Naloxone for one year.

“The agreement means one thing for New Jersey: more lives saved from preventable overdoses. The capped prices and rebates now available are imperative in allowing New Jersey’s law enforcement officers and first responders to continue the vital life-saving work they do in confronting drug abuse and addiction on our streets and in our communities,” said Governor Christie. “With the commitment from Amphastar Pharmaceuticals, we’re working together with the private sector to not just fight the stigma of addiction, but save lives and help rebuild families as effectively as possible.”

Naloxone – often referred to by its most commonly known trade name Narcan – is an opioid antagonist drug used to reverse overdoses of heroin and other opiate-based narcotics. Approximately 500 law enforcement agencies, including the New Jersey State Police, are now trained and equipped to administer the drug.

“This is a very important agreement -- not only for our police departments and other first responder agencies, but for all New Jersey citizens,” said Acting Attorney General John Hoffman. “We already have established that equipping law enforcement officers and other first responders with Naloxone saves lives. However, the drug costs money, and public resources are not unlimited. This agreement is vital as we continue to combat the scourge of drug addiction, and work to salvage even more lives that might otherwise be lost to overdose.”

“First responders have used this life-saving medication in more than 500 emergency overdose situations since last spring and providing rebates to public EMS agencies will save more lives,” said Health Commissioner Mary E.

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O'Dowd. "To address the public health challenge of addiction, the Department of Health has been working alongside the Office of the Attorney General to train and equip New Jersey's 28,000 EMTs to carry and administer this opioid antidote," O'Dowd said.

In a letter to the company's Chief Executive Officer dated May 8, 2015, Acting Attorney General Hoffman called Naloxone an "indispensable tool" in New Jersey's effort to combat the epidemic of overdose deaths occurring statewide, and urged Amphastar to provide the same rebate it already was providing public entities in New York and Ohio.

Under the agreement struck with Amphastar, the Office of the Attorney General will act as administrative conduit in the rebate process. Law enforcement agencies and other public first responder entities must submit a written accounting to the Office of the Attorney General that certifies the number of Amphastar syringe purchases made during a given calendar quarter. (The first rebate-eligible quarter ends on August 30, 2015.) The certification must include paid invoices or other "reasonably adequate" documentation of the number of syringes purchased.

The Office of the Attorney General will then consolidate all certifications into a single "summary submission" to Amphastar. Upon review and approval of the submitted summary by Amphastar, the company will pay a lump rebate sum to the Office of the Attorney General, which will in turn distribute individual rebate payments to public first responder entities.

For purposes of the Amphastar agreement, "public entity" is defined as any non-federal governmental entity located within New Jersey, including but not limited to state agencies, county or other local governments and their agencies, or law enforcement agencies. The agreement also covers non-profit, volunteer EMS organizations.

Eligibility requirements for the Naloxone syringe rebate program and other rebate-program-related information can be found at www.nj.gov/oag/naloxone.

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