

Punta Gorda Police Department's New Narcan® Program Revives Overdose Patient

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On Sunday, September 1, 2019 Officer Russell responded to an address on Mediterranean Drive in reference to a possible overdose. Upon arrival he found a 48 year old male slumped over on the couch, unconscious and barely breathing from a believed overdose of fentanyl. Luckily, just weeks ago, Officer Russell received training and began carrying Narcan® (naloxone) Nasal Spray, a potentially life saving medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Officer Russell administered the medication and the patient regained consciousness. The patient was treated by the Punta Gorda Fire Department and Charlotte County EMS before being transported to the hospital and is expected to make a full recovery.

“With the increase of dangerous opioids such as fentanyl coming into the country, every community needs to be prepared for an increase in overdose cases.”

Pam Davis, Chief of Police

While Punta Gorda has not seen the large number of overdose cases that are all too commonplace elsewhere in Florida and

across the United States, it is certainly not immune from the effects of the opioid epidemic. This is why, earlier this year, Chief Davis made the decision to begin a Narcan® program.



Officer holding Narcan® Nasal Spray

“With the increase of dangerous opioids such as fentanyl coming into the county, every community needs to be prepared for an increase in overdose cases,” said Chief Davis. The program, which has been implemented entirely through grant funding from the Florida Department of Health’s HEROS Grant, has allowed each patrol officer to carry Narcan® Nasal Spray on their utility belt so they will always be prepared when

they encounter a potential overdose victim. Narcan® Nasal Spray is administered much like any other nasal spray so it can be administered by officers prior to the arrival of medical personnel.

Lieutenant Dylan Renz stated, “Our officers are often the first responders on scene and, in an overdose situation, every second counts. Being able to administer the medication right away may mean the difference between life and death.”

Overdose cases are also not limited to those using drugs recreationally. Patients who are prescribed opioid medications for legitimate health conditions, may inadvertently take an extra dose or may have an adverse reaction to a new medication or dosage.

The instance this weekend was the first time Punta Gorda Police Officers have administered Narcan® Nasal Spray since implementing the program last month. You can find more information on Narcan® Nasal Spray by visiting the manufacturer’s website at www.narcan.com.