# UK Government Expands Access to Naloxone to Combat Rising Opioid Overdoses



The UK government has recently announced plans to make the anti-overdose drug naloxone more accessible without a prescription. Medical professionals such as nurses, paramedics, police officers, and probation workers will be able to distribute naloxone to individuals vulnerable to opioid overdose, allowing them to take supplies home. This expands current regulations that limit legal dispensing without a prescription to drug and alcohol treatment services.

Additionally, the legislation update will enable the provision of naloxone to friends or family of opioid users and to outreach workers serving homeless populations. The decision comes in the wake of opioid-related deaths averaging 40 per week across the UK, constituting the majority of drug-related fatalities in the country.

Health and Social Care Secretary Victoria Atkins emphasized the government's commitment to reducing opioid addiction-related deaths by broadening naloxone access. The policy change is part of a broader 10-year government initiative aimed at enhancing the drug and alcohol treatment and recovery sector. This includes creating more professional roles and improving training within the sector.

Justice Minister Edward Argar reported that around 400 staff at HMP Parc in Bridgend have been trained to use naloxone following several suspected drug-related deaths. The reform follows recommendations from a 2020 independent drug review by Dame Carol Black, who advocated for increased naloxone availability as a critical life-saving measure.