

June 12, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter as the Northwestern Health Unit's support for the Fort Frances Fire & Rescue Service to carry Naloxone for emergency administration to staff and members of the public.

The opportunity for Fire & Rescue Service to carry Naloxone is the result of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services taking a collaborative approach in launching the expansion of the Ontario Naloxone Program to include these services. The Northwestern Health Unit is currently working with all local Fire & Rescue Services to implement this initiative.

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist that can reverse an opioid overdose almost immediately. It is a safe medication that has no abuse potential, minimal to no risk, is easy to administer and can save a life. Current expansion efforts to support rescuers to carry Naloxone is one step to help stem the rising number of deaths from opioid use. Opioid-related deaths continue to be a significant public health issue and death rates continue to rise. There were 1,053 opioid-related deaths in Ontario from January to October in 2017, compared to 694 during the same period in 2016, representing a 52 per cent increase. This recent data on opioid-related mortality and morbidity shows the urgent need for such an initiative.

The Northwestern Health Unit commends the Fort Frances Fire & Rescue Service for taking steps to expand the ways in which they can help save lives.

If you require further information or would like us to attend to answer any questions, please feel free to contact us directly and we will make ourselves available for discussion or clarification.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and cooperation in this life-saving initiative.

Yours truly,



Gillian Lunny
Manager, Sexual Health & Harm Reduction