



NSW Ministry of Health



# NSW Take Home Naloxone Program

Angela Matheson

Manager, Harm Reduction, NSW Ministry of Health

[Angela.Matheson@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Angela.Matheson@health.nsw.gov.au)

26 July 2023

# What is naloxone?

- Naloxone is a Schedule 3 short-acting opioid antagonist medicines that reverse opioid overdose. The NSW Program provides 2 options – a pre-filled syringe for injection (Prenoxad) and an intranasal spray (Nyxoid).
- The National Drug Strategy 2017-2026 and the World Health Organisation identify that increasing access to naloxone is an evidence-based strategy for preventing and responding to opioid overdoses.



# Why community naloxone access matters

---

- Opioid overdose deaths are increasing in Australia: 338 people died from opioids in 2006. 882 died in 2019.
- Aboriginal people are over-represented amongst these deaths.
- These deaths are preventable.
- Naloxone is safe and easy to administer. When an overdose happens, trained community members can administer naloxone while waiting for an ambulance.
- Naloxone saves lives, reduces morbidity, and prevents family and community trauma.

# NSW Take Home Naloxone Program

---

- Health and welfare workers are trained, credentialed and legally authorised to supply naloxone to clients for free and without a prescription.
- Program was developed, piloted, and evaluated by clinical and subject matter experts, in consultation with consumers.
- Non-government organisations (NGOs) that provide health/welfare services can become 'participating services' and supply naloxone to people who might witness or experience opioid overdose. This includes Aboriginal health services.
- Workers teach clients when and how to administer naloxone to reverse an overdose. Workers also supply the naloxone to the client. It's a 10 minute intervention.

# ACCHSs and other NGOs can improve THN access

---

## Increasing availability:

- NGOs and their workers are legally enabled to supply naloxone
- Offering THN promotes harm reduction, not risk-taking.

## Removing cost:

- NGOs receive staff training & naloxone medicines at no cost
- NGOs supply naloxone to clients for free





## Addressing stigma:

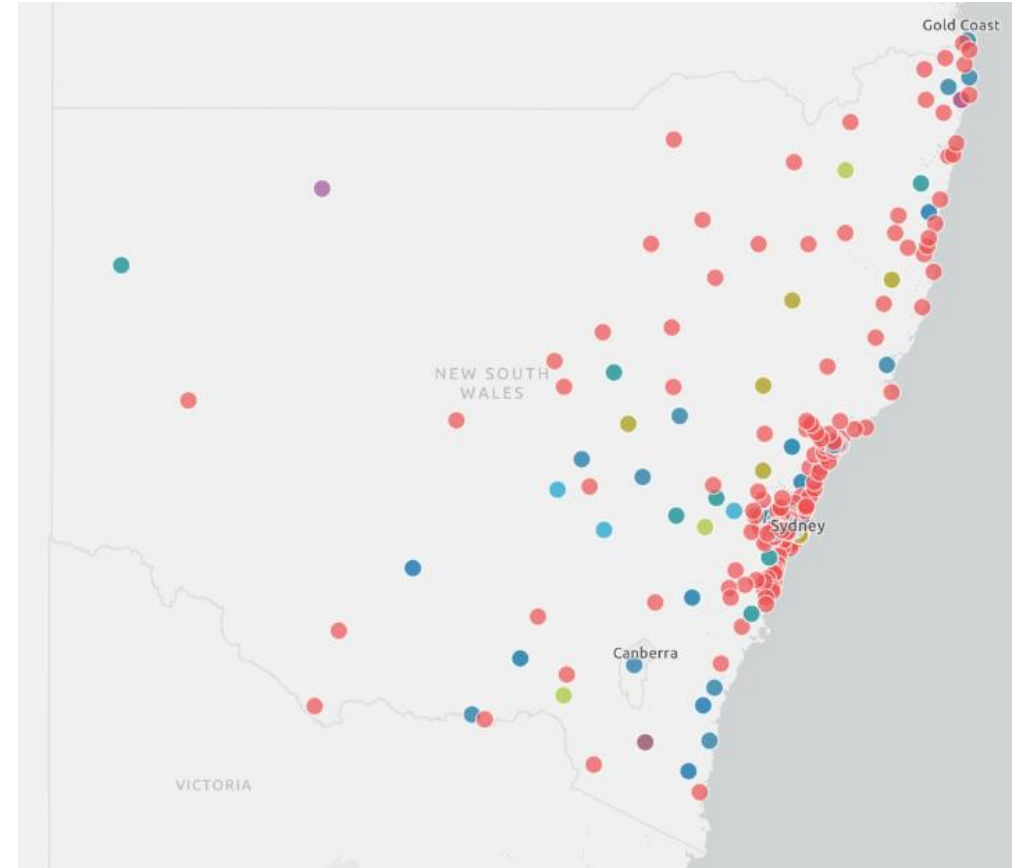
- People are given the resources they need, and empowered to use their skills and expertise to save a life.

# NSW THN Program Implementation

THN interventions in the 12 months to June 2022:

- 74 public health services supplied **>1500 units**
- 53 Justice Health sites supplied **>780 units**
- 21 NGOs supplied **>170 units**
- 729 NSW community pharmacies in Aust Govt PBS Pilot **>5030 units**

-  Public health service
-  Justice Health service
-  NGO
-  Community pharmacy



# A recent evaluation found...

## PBS Subsidised TAKE HOME NALOXONE Pilot

“ Well it felt good for me ... saving somebody's life. ...Overdoses shouldn't happen because it's preventable.

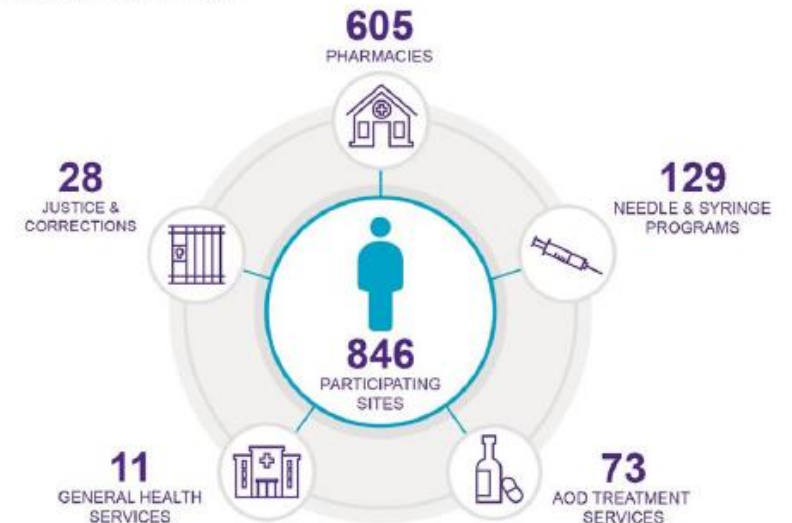
From December 2019, the Australian Government funded a Take Home Naloxone (THN) Pilot subsidised through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

This allowed people at risk of experiencing or witnessing an opioid overdose or adverse reaction to access naloxone without cost, without a prescription and from a variety of settings in NSW, SA, and WA.

### DURING THE PILOT...



### THN WAS ACCESSED FROM



# Workforce development for ACCHS staff

---

Participating NGO services get naloxone medicines and staff training for free.

Workers at participating services undertake ½ day online or in person training session to supply naloxone appropriately.

Training covers:

- Opioid overdose signs and risk factors
- Naloxone pharmacology, formulations and administration
- Medication handling, medico-legal requirements
- How to deliver brief interventions to clients (eligibility, consent, contraindications, knowledge and attitudes).



# How to get involved

---

## Take Home Naloxone

- Fill out an expression of interest form: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/programs/Pages/naloxone-ngo-and-private-service.aspx#bookmark3>
- Got questions? Contact us: [moh-naloxone@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:moh-naloxone@health.nsw.gov.au)
- Community information is available: <https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/Naloxone>

## Opioid Treatment Program

- PBS changes means opioid treatment will be much more affordable for clients.
- More info: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aod/Pages/otp-transition-s100-hsd-program.aspx>
- Got questions? Contact [Suzie.Hudson@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Suzie.Hudson@health.nsw.gov.au) or [Deborah.Zador@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Deborah.Zador@health.nsw.gov.au)