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Governor Wolf Recognizes Law Enforcement for Battling Opioid Epidemic

Harrisburg, PA – Governor Wolf today thanked Pennsylvania’s law enforcement community for combating the opioid epidemic by carrying the overdose reversal drug Naloxone. There are now 17 counties that have full participation of police departments carrying Naloxone. He also encouraged other municipal police departments to carry Naloxone. Governor Tom Wolf was joined by the Pennsylvania State Police, district attorneys, capitol police officers, and other state partners.

“I am proud to announce that we now have 17 counties with complete police participation in carrying naloxone – the overdose revival antidote,” said Governor Tom Wolf. “More than 1,500 opioid overdoses have been reversed by state and local police officers since November of 2014,” said Governor Wolf. “While my goal remains having 67 counties with 100 percent naloxone participation by municipal police departments, these 17 counties are a wonderful start. I want to thank you all for your efforts and encourage you to keep fighting.”

“This opioid epidemic is devastating our communities and families,” said Gary Tennis, secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs. “Pennsylvania loses 10 people a day to overdoses. These people are mothers, fathers, daughters and sons. It’s heartbreaking to families to lose a loved one.

“With leadership from Governor Tom Wolf at the state level and help from the Pennsylvania State Police, our district attorneys and other county law enforcement partners and first responders, we can save lives and preserve families,” said Tennis.

The 13 counties with all municipal police departments carrying naloxone include: Butler, Chester, Clarion, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Lehigh, Northampton, Perry, Potter, Wayne, Wyoming, and York. The four additional counties with naloxone coverage by Pennsylvania State Police include: Forest, Fulton, Sullivan, and Juniata. These counties do not have municipal police departments.

“The Pennsylvania State Police remains committed to fighting this epidemic,” said Lt. Col. Stephen Bucar. “Strong working relationships with the respective district attorneys and law enforcement partners throughout the commonwealth enhance these efforts.”

“In York County alone we have save over 165 lives this year alone, for a total of 264 since our naloxone program started,” said York County District Attorney Tom Kearney.

Governor Wolf also outlined his legislative priorities to battle the opioid epidemic, including:

- Strengthen the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program so that doctors are required and able to check the system each time they prescribe opioids
- Better prepare doctors and physicians for prescribing opioids and pain management drugs improving medical school and continuing education curricula on opioids
- Limit the number of opioids a patient can receive at emergency rooms to a seven-day supply with no refills limit the number of opioids a patient can receive at emergency rooms to a seven-day supply with no refills

- Require insurance companies to cover abuse deterrent opioids that make it more difficult to abuse these drugs
- Establish a voluntary directive, to allow patients who do not want to be prescribed opioids to deny or refuse the administration of these drugs

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