



# Opioid Overdose/Misuse (Optional)

## Policy:

Patients who have experienced an opioid overdose/misuse should be offered a variety of options to more appropriately manage their care where available in the community. All care should be provided within the rules and regulations of the state of North Carolina.

## Purpose:

- To ensure patients are offered options for treatment of opioid misuse where available.
- Provide harm reduction measures related to opioid misuse.

## Procedure:

1. Patients must be over 18 years of age and experienced unintentional overdose or misuse of an opioid medication(s) only. Patients must NOT have experienced cardiac arrest defined as administration of chest compressions by first responders or EMS during the incident.
2. The patient must regain a normal mental status and respiratory effort after the administration of naloxone, NOT have suicidal or homicidal ideations/intentions, and NOT ingested substance(s) for intentional self-harm.
3. Patients who have co-ingested other substances should be treated based on appropriate protocol. Consult Carolina Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for advice if needed.
4. Transport to an Emergency Department should be offered to all patients. For patients who decline transport to an Emergency Department, alternative destinations should be offered if available in the community. Options may include assistance with accessing inpatient treatment centers, outpatient facilities, mobile crisis solutions, addiction specialists, and/or other local treatment options.
5. In order to decline transport, the patient must meet the following criteria:
  - a) Be 18 years or older
  - b) Maintain a GCS of 15 (alert, and oriented to time, place, person, and situation)
  - c) Demonstrate decision-making capacity as outlined in Universal Protocol (UP 1) Pearls.
6. If patient declines transport to an Emergency Department, if available, a naloxone kit should be left with the patient, family, and/or friends on scene. EMS should provide brief education on how to properly use these kits and refer them to read all package related material and instructions provided by the manufacturer.
7. In addition to naloxone kits, the following items should be offered where possible/available:
  - a) Offer to properly dispose of any dirty needles following your agency policy
  - b) Provide clean needles/syringes where possible following your agency policy
  - c) Refer to a community peer support team if available
  - d) Provide literature outlining resources for substance misuse treatment programs in the community
  - e) Provide Medication Assisted Therapy if available and per your agency policy and protocols.