The State Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (SEMAC) has approved a proposal to allow basic life support emergency medical services agencies and certified first responders to carry a version of the overdose reversal drug naloxone hydrochloride, marketed under the name Narcan. Intranasal Narcan is sprayed into the nostrils instead of injected into the body and reverses the respiratory depression that can result in death caused by an overdose of opioid-based drugs such as prescription painkillers and heroin. Several counties have been involved in a pilot project the past year or so and have reported very good results.

This measure, if approved by the director of the Bureau of EMS and the Commissioner of the Department of Health, will allow BLS ambulance and first responder agencies carry and administer intranasal Narcan. In addition, the current but little known “Friends and Family” intranasal Narcan program will be developed into a “Public Access Narcan” program similar to the AED and Epi Auti-injector programs.