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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Essex County Health Department announces opioid overdose prevention program*

**Elizabethtown, NY.** The Essex County Health Department (ECHD) is now registered as an overdose prevention program through the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH). The focus of ECHD's Community Opioid Overdose Prevention (COOP) Program is to train community members to recognize and respond to an overdose and increase access to give naloxone (Narcan) to prevent fatalities.

Through our COOP program, community members can anonymously request a Narcan kit, receive training on administering, and report Narcan usage by visiting our website (<https://essexcountyny.gov/Health>). Included in each kit are local contacts to connect people with recovery support, 24hr crisis access, and referral services.

"All registered opioid overdose programs have approved overdose trainers and response educators. Programs are supplied naloxone by the NYSDOH," stated Linda Beers, Director of Public Health for the Essex County Health Department (ECHD). "This program advances ECHD's local response to opioid overdoses and urgent need for overdose prevention training. It serves to increase access to naloxone for community members who may witness an overdose and want to respond. Many people, either themselves, a family member, or someone they know have been impacted by this epidemic and people who use drugs have a right to respect, health and access to life-saving tools and information." expressed Beers.

There have been at least thirty reported overdose reversals in Essex County in 2023, though reversals go unreported if EMS/first responders are not called.

"Opioid overdose remains a public health concern in Essex County and across NYS," stressed Jessica Darney Buehler, ECHD's Director of Health Planning and Promotion. "Rural communities are more vulnerable to the opioid crisis and face barriers such as access to harm reduction,



## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Public Health Unit

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH- Linda Beers, MPH  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH PROMOTION &  
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medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD), and recovery support programs. ECHD is committed to using all the tools available to those in need in our small communities. Carrying naloxone is a proven, lifesaving strategy that is often used in conjunction with other interventions that link people to resources." said Buehler.

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