



Naloxone Access Navigation Guide for Erie County: A Quick Reference for Community-Facing Providers, Clinicians/Prescribers, and Agencies and County Partners

1. How to Get Naloxone at a Pharmacy

OTC (Over-the-Counter) Option:

- Available on the retail shelf in many pharmacies.
- Requires cash payment (\$40-\$60+).
- No interaction required – but this removes the opportunity for counseling on overdose recognition, response, and resources

Insurance Option:

- Go directly to the pharmacy counter (do not rely on shelf availability).
- If naloxone is found OTC on the shelf, bring it to the pharmacy counter and ask them to bill insurance.
- Pharmacists can dispense naloxone under the NYS Standing Order even if it is not stocked on the shelf.

N-CAP (Naloxone Co-Payment Assistance Program):

- Reduces or eliminates copays when billed to insurance.
- Teach clients to ask: “Can you please submit this through N-CAP?”

2. What to Do When Access Breaks Down

- If a pharmacy says naloxone is out of stock: Ask if they can check other store locations or order it.
- If they say OTC is the only option: Ask for dispensing under the standing order and billing insurance.
- If the copay is high: Ask them to try N-CAP.
- If they say they don’t dispense naloxone: May be a training or workflow breakdown; ask to speak directly to the pharmacist, who is authorized to dispense without a prescription under the NYS standing order or advise of availability via OTC.

3. Where to Find Naloxone Outside the Pharmacy

- Encourage clients to know multiple access points:
 - Harm-reduction programs

- Community-based organizations
- Public-health distribution events
- Vending machines / wall-mounted kits (expanding)
- Etc.

Keep an updated local list of reliable pharmacies and other distribution sites.

4. Quick Script to Teach Clients

- “Go to the pharmacy counter and ask them to bill your insurance. If the copay is high, ask them to try N-CAP. If the product is on the shelf, bring it to the counter and ask for it under the standing order.”

5. Key Takeaway

Most access failures occur not because naloxone is truly unavailable — but because people don’t know how to navigate pharmacy workflows, which can differ based on the pharmacy. Providing clients with a prescription, even though OTC/standing-order access exists, can help the pharmacy automatically bill insurance or N-CAP and prevent many workflow barriers. These quick tips can make navigating the pharmacy naloxone access easier for your patient or client!