

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR KARA HAHN



FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### GIVING POLICE AN ANTIDOTE TO OVERDOSE

*Legislator Hahn wins approval for her bill to combat  
an epidemic of heroin and opiate related deaths in Suffolk*

RIVERHEAD, NY – In Suffolk County where the number of opiate related fatalities increased by over 72 percent between 2004 and 2011, the Legislature last week adopted a bill intended to reduce the number of overdose deaths. Sponsored by Legislator Kara Hahn (D-Setauket), [Introductory Resolution 1281-2012](#) will expand a Health Department opioid antagonist pilot program for emergency medical technicians to include the Suffolk County Police Department as well, who are oftentimes the first responders to calls involving overdoses.

“Time is critical in all medical emergencies, but can truly mean the difference between life and death in cases involving drug overdoses,” said Legislator Kara Hahn. “By allowing for the administration of life saving treatments more quickly than is currently the case, this bill will hopefully improve the outcomes of opioid overdoses here in Suffolk County”

Under Hahn’s proposal naloxone hydrochloride, commonly referred to by its brand name Narcan, will be available to responding Police Officers in selected precincts after receiving training on the signs of opiate overdose and instruction on how to administer the drug. Following a two year trial in the communities selected for this pilot project, the County’s

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Health and Police Departments will evaluate the program's use and effectiveness; compile data on the use of Narcan by police officers during the trial period and issue a recommendation to lawmakers on the future of this policy. The results of this evaluation and recommendations are expected to be issued to members of the Legislature and the County Executive within 60 days following the end of the two year trial period.

According to the drug's manufacturer, Endo Pharmaceuticals, Narcan is designed for intravenous, intramuscular, or subcutaneous administration for the "complete or partial reversal of opioid depression, including respiratory depression. It is also used for diagnosis of suspected or known acute opioid overdose and also for blood pressure support in septic shock." The individual doses that will be available to the police are expected to cost less than \$3.00 per treatment.

"Over the past five years we have seen a spike in opium use across Long Island, with more and more people becoming addicted to heroin and pain pills," Legislator Hahn added. "While the ultimate goal is to have these addicts seek treatment, the reality is that for too many death comes before sobriety. It is my hope that this bill will allow someone's child the time and a second chance to get clean."

The bill now goes to County Executive Steve Bellone for his signature.

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