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For Immediate Release

Spike Among Overdoses Involving Opioids: Columbia County

Columbia County—August 3, 2022 – Columbia County Department of Health has been notified of a spike in overdoses among Columbia County residents due to opioids in the past week. Oxycodone has been identified as an opioid correlated to the spike. Individuals who are using drugs that are not prescribed to them may not know what drugs are in a substance and in what quantity.

Columbia County residents can take important steps to reduce their risk of an opioid related overdose. Naloxone is a medication that can reverse an opioid overdose and can be given as a nasal spray (NARCAN®). NARCAN® Nasal Spray is available at no cost to the individual at Columbia County Department of Health by walk-in or calling (608) 742-9751. Individuals can also receive NARCAN® Nasal Spray for free from Prevention and Response Columbia County (PARCC). Friends and family play a critical role in recognizing the signs of overdose, calling 911 immediately, and administering naloxone. Naloxone is safe to give and will not harm someone who is not having an opioid overdose. You can find additional locations where you can request naloxone, by visiting dhs.wisconsin.gov/opioids/safer-use.htm.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), signs of an overdose may include:

- Small, constricted “pinpoint pupils”
- Falling asleep or loss of consciousness
- Slow, shallow breathing
- Choking or gurgling sounds
- Limp body
- Pale, blue, or cold skin

Additional harm reduction efforts include utilizing fentanyl test strips and never using drugs alone. Fentanyl test strips can be used to determine if fentanyl is present in a substance. Fentanyl test strips can be sourced through Vivent Health by calling (608) 332-6169. If you are going to use by yourself, call Never Use Alone at (800) 484-3731. You will be asked for your first name, location and the number you are calling from. If you stop responding after using, an operator will notify emergency services immediately.

Mission Statement: To promote and protect the health and safety of our community.

The Columbia County Medication Assisted Treatment Program (MAT) will facilitate referrals to medication-assisted treatment, provide ongoing case management services and wrap around community-based services to individuals struggling with an opioid addiction. Visit www.co.columbia.wi.us/ColumbiaCounty/hhs/Divisions/BehavioralHealth/MedicationAssistedTreatmentProgram/tabid/3585/default.aspx to learn more or call (608) 742-9227.

The Harbor Recovery Center provides support for individuals and their families who are struggling with substance use and/or mental health by fostering a culture of recovery in Columbia County. Visit www.theharborrecoverycenter.com to learn more.

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