

## Report of the Health Officer

This year's health report is a bit longer in length than the usual. I feel it's important to fully address the drug crisis that is occurring in our community and provide information and resources that may assist a resident in need.

Sadly, health in Fremont has been greatly impacted by the heroin epidemic. Abuse of heroin and other opioids is no longer just a big city issue; it is affecting our small rural community in alarming numbers. Abuse is occurring among Fremont residents of all age groups, in all neighborhoods, and equally in both genders. Opioid drugs include heroin as well as prescription pain medications such as Percocet, Vicodin, Morphine, Fentanyl, and OxyContin. There were over 400 opioid related overdose deaths that occurred in New Hampshire in 2015.

When a person is overdosing on an opioid, breathing can slow down or stop and it can be very hard to wake them from this state. Naloxone (Narcan) is a prescription medicine that blocks the effects of opioids and reverses an overdose; providing a window of opportunity to save a life. If you suspect an opioid drug overdose, call 911, start rescue breathing, administer naloxone, and wait for emergency responders to arrive.

In June 2015, Governor Hassan signed into law (House Bills: 270 & 271) allowing family members and friends of those at risk for opioid overdose to carry Naloxone. With the passing of this law, there are now three ways to access Naloxone in your community:

1. Ask your doctor for a prescription and fill the prescription at your pharmacy. Be sure to check with your pharmacy on availability. Please note: Co-pays may apply depending on your health insurance plan.
2. Some pharmacies can dispense Naloxone without requiring a prescription from your doctor. Please call your pharmacy to inquire if a prescription is needed.
3. State-purchased Naloxone kits are available at no cost to patients. Community Health Centers offering these kits in Rockingham County are: Lamprey Health Care in located in Newmarket and Families First of the Greater Seacoast located in Portsmouth.

In response to the opioid crisis in New Hampshire, the state has created the **Anyone Anytime Campaign** to educate the public and professionals about addiction, emergency overdose medication and accessibility to support services for those experiencing opioid addiction. This campaign is designed to help anyone affected by this crisis including: people experiencing addiction; parents, family and friends of those experiencing addiction; and health care, safety, and other system staff working with people who may be experiencing addiction. Please visit <http://drugfreenh.org/anyoneanytime> for in depth information.

Seasonal influenza is always a concern and preventative measures are key. Please remember to sneeze and cough into your sleeve or a tissue, wash your hands frequently and stay home from

work or school if you have a fever or signs of illness. Annual influenza vaccines are recommended for everyone ages 6 months and up.

Tick-borne diseases such as Lyme, Babesiosis, Anaplasmosis, and Powassan Virus and mosquito-borne diseases such as EEE and West Nile Virus can be serious illnesses and can affect people of any age. Fremont continues to utilize a Mosquito Control Program as a proactive measure in preventing disease. Please remember for the best protection against ticks and mosquitos to wear clothing with long pants and sleeves, and use an insect repellant that contains 20-30% DEET.

Health Officer Bob Meade attended the NH Health Officers Association Spring & Fall Workshops obtaining knowledge of healthy housing standards, tick-borne diseases and prevention, bedbugs, and asbestos abatement. Deputy Health Officer Carla Smith attended the NH Emergency Preparedness Conference engaging in safety training with other practitioners from fields such as Emergency Management, Fire, EMS, Law Enforcement, Healthcare, Local Government, Public Works, Education, and Social Services. Bob and Carla both participate on the Fremont Safety Committee which addresses safety and wellness for all town buildings. Safety and wellness tips as well as links to other sources can be found at [www.Fremont.nh.gov](http://www.Fremont.nh.gov)

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Smith  
Deputy Health Officer



*Fremont Safety Services Escorting Santa through the streets of Fremont  
December 19, 2015*

*Photo Courtesy of Bob Meade*