



**STATE TREK: March 3-4, 2009 • Springfield  
ILLINOIS HIV/AIDS LOBBY DAYS**

**VOTE YES ON HB 497 (Miller)**

**Expand Prescription of a Lifesaving Overdose Reversal Drug, Narcan**

HB 497 would expand prescription of Narcan—a safe, effective, and low-cost drug overdose antidote. In 2007, more than half as many people (308) reportedly died of drug overdoses in Cook County as died of murders (523).

**2009 Supporters:**

- Illinois Society of Addiction Medicine
- Illinois Nurses Association
- Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association
- Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA)

**2009 Opponents: NONE**

**Five states have expanded Narcan prescription:** California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Mexico, and New York.

**Narcan prescription does not encourage drug use.** Recent research found that individuals trained to administer Narcan reduced their heroin use six months later (Seal et al., 2005).

**A Chicago-based Narcan prescription program has saved more than 1,000 lives since 2001.** Fatal drug overdoses are now at an 11-year low in Cook County, thanks to this program. More lives could be saved by increasing the number of similar programs across the state.

**The bill will prevent drug overdoses and save lives by:**

- Requiring providers to **give patients information about safe overdose reversal** when prescribing Narcan.
- **Protecting providers from disciplinary action for prescribing Narcan** to patients who have received information and are capable of administering the medication in an emergency.
- **Permitting individuals to administer Narcan in an emergency**, if they have received information above from providers. The bill **protects individuals from civil or criminal prosecution** for practicing medicine without a license.

**What is Narcan?** Narcan is a generic prescription drug that reverses opiate drug overdoses, such as heroin, methadone, or OxyContin. It is:

- **Safe:** Narcan cannot be abused, and has no effect on a non-opioid user. It has the same level of regulation as prescription ibuprofen, and has significantly less danger of side effects. It is not a controlled substance.
- **Easy to administer:** Narcan is usually injected into a muscle. Simple training—like education provided to EpiPen users—is required to administer Narcan.
- **Low-cost:** Less than \$2 per dose.

For more information, contact John Peller, 312-719-6208, [jpeller@aidschicago.org](mailto:jpeller@aidschicago.org).