AN ACT Relating to prescribing opioid overdose reversal medication; adding a new section to chapter 69.41 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature finds that Washington has made great strides in recent years to address the opioid crisis in our state. However, there continues to be too many deaths from opioid overdose in communities across the state. The use of opioid antagonists such as naloxone reverses the effects of opioids and can be lifesaving when an opioid overdose occurs.

The legislature intends to provide naloxone prescriptions to persons who present in an emergency department with an opioid overdose, along with a referral to services from a substance use disorder peer specialist. The legislature intends that this change will increase the number of opioid prescribed patients who have access to a lifesaving overdose intervention in the event of an emergency, with the goal of reducing the likelihood that an opioid overdose event for a given patient may lead to fatality or long-term adverse health outcomes and the likelihood of patients and their families will face long-term financial and emotional burdens due to an opioid overdose event.
NEW SECTION.  Sec. 2.  A new section is added to chapter 69.41
RCW to read as follows:

(1) A practitioner shall provide a current prescription or
confirm the patient has a current prescription for an opioid overdose
reversal medication when the patient presents in an emergency
department with an opioid overdose or is referred for involuntary
treatment under chapter 71.05 RCW and has had a recent opioid
overdose.

(2) A practitioner who provides a prescription under subsection
(1) of this section shall refer the patient to the services of a
substance use disorder peer specialist.

(3) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Opioid overdose reversal medication" means any drug used to
reverse an opioid overdose that binds to opioid receptors and blocks
or inhibits the effects of opioids acting on those receptors.

(b) "Practitioner" has the meaning provided in RCW 69.50.101.

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