

The Nova Scotia Antidote Program is pleased to present another Quarterly Report, which provides information on changes and trends in antidote therapy and reports ongoing Provincial Antidote usage.

Antidote usage Jan 1 to Mar 31, 2023						
Western Zone	Northern Zone	Eastern Zone	Central Zone	IWK	Quarterly Total	Year to Date
15	7	8	25	4	59	59

Highlights of antidote use during the past 3 months

A total of **59 antidotes** were used in **49 different patient cases**. Of these, 5 antidotes were used by community hospitals, 39 in regional facilities and 15 in tertiary hospitals.

- Naloxone was the most used antidote during the 2023 quarter #1 period. It was used 19 times in known or suspected opioid toxicity. There was distribution in use over all hospital types.
- Sodium Bicarbonate was used 17 times with a variety of indications such as drug or toxin-induced cardiotoxicity (wide complex dysrhythmia), toxin-induced metabolic acidosis and to enhance the elimination of certain drugs.
- There were five uses of Fomepizole, the antidote used to prevent methanol and ethylene glycol toxicity.

Antidote Transition to Automated Dispensing Machines

Throughout the province, the antidote stock is making the move from the kits into the new Pyxis automated medication dispensing machines. This means the antidotes can be accessed in the same way other medications are in the Emergency Department. Even though there will no longer be physical kits, the core of the antidote program remains unchanged, with nearby sites sharing and acting as a network to provide each other with antidotes in the case of an emergency. The stocking guidelines were created with that in mind, that the amount of each antidote in the kit be enough to initiate treatment and then provide time to receive replenishment from another local site that is part of the program.

It is important to contact the Poison Centre for several reasons.

1. We can help with the management of patients with **acute or chronic drug toxicity** and with appropriate use of antidotes and other treatments. For example – we can help with assessing the need for Digoxin Immune Fab in chronic digoxin toxicity and recommend appropriate dosing.
2. As part of the Provincial Antidote Program, we are required to track the use of all antidotes.
3. Data from the Atlantic Canada Poison Centre is used to monitor and track exposures, including poisonings, overdoses, accidental exposures, adverse events etc. across Nova Scotia.

Contact the Poison Centre – 1-800-565-8161