

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 Apr 1 to Jun 30, 2024						
Western Zone	Northern Zone	Eastern Zone	Central Zone	IWK	Quarterly Total	Year to Date
13	6	17	18	2	56	111

Highlights of antidote use during the past 3 months

A total of **56 antidotes** were used in **44 different patient cases**. Of these, 11 antidotes were used by community hospitals, 36 in regional facilities and 9 in tertiary hospitals.

- Naloxone was the most used antidote during the 2024 quarter #2 period. It was used 23 times in known or suspected opioid toxicity. There was distribution in use over all hospital types.
- Fomepizole was used 7 times to treat massive acetaminophen overdoses or toxic alcohols. A significant increase over previous quarters.
- Calcium Channel Blocker(s), more specifically Amlodipine, continue to be a large driver of antidote use. There were 10 antidote uses associated with toxicity from this medication over the captured timeline.

Antidote Shortages

Emergency departments across the NSHA and the IWK have experienced difficulty accessing a number of antidotes due to drug shortages. Most recently, shortages have occurred with Hydroxocobalamin (Cyanokit®) and Digoxin Immune Fab (Digifab®). Drug shortages are likely to be a continued and unavoidable hurdle facing the Nova Scotia Antidote Program. Despite this concern, the collaborative nature of the program and the current network of antidotes spread across the province allows for accommodation of moderate shortage by shifting antidotes through the province to cover any gaps. In case of inability to access antidotes due to shortage, consider contacting the nearest emergency department for a discussion about how to best ensure coverage in the area with the antidote stock available. The Nova Scotia Provincial Antidote Program Co-ordinator can also be contacted help support this endeavour.

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 Sodium Bicarbonate for sodium channel blockade, salicylate toxicity and toxin-induced acidosis.
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