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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORANGE COUNTY FIRST TO USE OVERDOSE PREVENTION DRUG

ORANGE COUNTY, NC (December 8, 2015)—The Board of Orange County Commissioners congratulates the Board of Health, Orange County Emergency Services, Chapel Hill Police, Carrboro Police, the Orange County Sheriff’s Office, and the Orange County Health Department for teaming up to save residents who experience an overdose from opioids, such as prescription pain killers and heroin.

These agencies are the recipient of the 2015 Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) Excellence in Innovation Award for the creation of the Naloxone Access program, which increases access to naloxone through the health department and first responders.

Orange County is the first health department to take advantage of the 2013 Good Samaritan/Naloxone Access legislation, allowing doctors, family and friends to administer naloxone to someone who overdoses on opioids, without being prosecuted.

“Naloxone, also known as Narcan, quickly and effectively reverses overdose, if administered in time. This program places Orange County on the map, leading the way for other communities to follow this cost effective, life-saving example,” said Dr. Colleen Bridger, director of the Orange County Health Department.

Emergency Services staff are trained and equipped with naloxone kits and they are already seeing the results.

“This initiative demonstrates there are no limits when agencies work together. There have been three police-initiated opioid overdose reversals since the program started. Officers have demonstrated excellent judgment and their actions have positive

outcomes for those individuals," said Dinah Jeffries, interim director of Orange County Emergency Services.

Law enforcement agencies in the county are trained and either already deploying or prepared to immediately deploy naloxone, instead of waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

"Good things happen in public safety when the right person is in the right place at the right time with the right training and equipment. This program gives us the ability to successfully intervene to save a life," said Captain Chris Atack of the Carrboro Police Department.

"We have already experienced the life-saving benefits of naloxone in Orange County and I am glad that, through the leadership of the Orange County Health Department, the members of the Chapel Hill Police Department are bringing this resource to our community," said Chief Chris Blue.

Similarly, the Health Department's public health nurses screen patients, provide overdose education, and dispense free naloxone kits to clients who are at-risk, or in a position to help someone who is at-risk for opioid overdose. The goal of these screenings is to increase clients' willingness to discuss the sensitive issue of their substance abuse problem.

For more information about the Naloxone Access program, please contact Meredith Stewart, program manager at 919.245.2070 or mstewart@orangecountync.gov

About the Excellence in Innovation Awards

The LGFCU Excellence in Innovation Awards program provides a total of \$10,000 in rewards to county employees who develop successful programs that help counties improve services to citizens. Cash awards of \$1,000 each are given to two or more programs in each of four categories - general government, health and human services, public information/participation and intergovernmental collaboration.



Naloxone Access Program Partners – Orange County Board of Health, Orange County Health Department, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Carrboro Police Department, Chapel Hill Police Department, and Orange County Emergency Services – accept award from the NC Association of County Commissioners and the Local Governments Federal Credit Union.

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