

# State of New York

## Executive Chamber

### Proclamation

**Whereas**, drug overdose is a serious public health concern and prescription opioid-related overdose has increased as a health threat; and

**Whereas**, since 2003, prescription opioid analgesics have been responsible for more unintentional drug overdose deaths in the United States than cocaine and heroin combined; unintentional drug overdose deaths are the second leading cause of all injury deaths in the nation, after motor vehicle-related deaths; and

**Whereas**, drug overdose is a significant problem in New York State, where data indicates that nearly 900 fatalities resulted from accidental overdoses in 2008; close to 70% of these deaths involved the use of opioids, including heroin and prescribed analgesics; many of these deaths and the morbidity from non-fatal overdoses can be prevented; in 2008, there were 21,202 opioid-related hospital admissions, as well as 9,135 opioid-related emergency room visits that did not result in a hospital admission

**Whereas**, most overdoses are not instantaneous and the majority of them are witnessed by others; many overdose fatalities are preventable, especially if witnesses have had appropriate training and are prepared to respond in a safe and effective manner; prevention measures include understanding specific risk factors (such as polydrug use and recent abstinence), recognizing the signs of an overdose, and responding appropriately; responses include contacting emergency medical services (EMS), providing rescue breathing and administering naloxone, an FDA-approved drug, which reverses the effects of opioid overdoses; and

**Whereas**, the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) oversees one of the largest addiction services systems in the nation, which funds or certifies over 1,500 programs throughout the state; to help reduce the number of overdoses, OASAS has created a *Medicine Cabinet Inventory* designed to help New Yorkers track prescription and over-the-counter medicines in the home; it is a valuable tool that helps parents and family members keep track of medications, as incorrect dosing and mixing of these medications can be deadly; OASAS has also partnered with other state agencies, such as the Department of Health, on many initiatives including the *Practitioner Notification Program*, prescription opioid addiction treatment education and intervention, health advisories and guidelines for prescribers on responsible medication prescribing; in addition, OASAS is very active in providing educational workshops and lectures at various venues, such as PTA's, school nurse conferences, and substance use programs; and

**Whereas**, a life-saving law in New York State that took effect in 2006 and is overseen by the State Department of Health, created the Opioid Overdose Prevention Program, making it legal for individuals in the State who are trained by a register program to be prescribed naloxone and administer it to another person to prevent an opioid overdose from becoming fatal; and

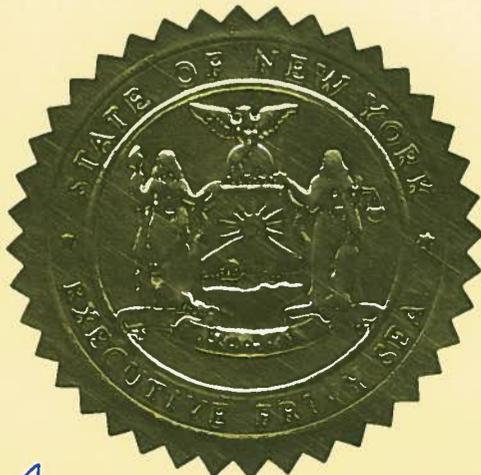
**Whereas**, New York State acknowledges the value of the Opioid Overdose Prevention Program and encourages citizens to become aware and embrace this prevention program, which has saved more than 450 lives since its inception; and

**Whereas**, I call upon the medical community, community-based organizations and consumers to work with state and local governments to collaborate and develop innovative, immediate and long-term strategies to address this critical health problem;

**Now, Therefore**, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim August 31, 2011 as

## OPIOID OVERDOSE PREVENTION DAY

in the Empire State.



**Given** under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this twenty-second day of August in the year two thousand eleven.

Governor

Secretary to the Governor