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SFPD Narcan Kits Continue to Save Lives

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Over the past year, the San Francisco Police Department partnered with the Harm Reduction Coalition's Drug Overdose Prevention and Education (DOPE) project. The collaboration has resulted in SFPD cars being equipped with lifesaving Narcan kits. Officers have been trained on how to recognize life threatening opioid overdoses from such drugs as heroin and prescription painkillers and administer the intranasal naloxone as an antidote.

Since May of 2015, SFPD officers assigned to Tenderloin Station administered Narcan (Naloxone) to three victims suffering from apparent opioid overdoses. On May 17th, at 10:34 AM, two Tenderloin officers walking a beat on Golden Gate Avenue near Hyde Street came upon an unconscious and unresponsive adult female laying on the sidewalk. The officers recognized the subject from a prior medical call involving an opiate overdose. The officers requested an ambulance. A third officer equipped with a Narcan Kit responded to the scene. The officers administered the Narcan and the victim took a breath and opened her eyes. Responding paramedics stated that the victim's symptoms were consistent with an opiate overdose. She was subsequently taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital for treatment.

On July 13th, at 3:07 PM, several officers on bicycle patrol in the area of 550 Stevenson Street came upon a 48 year-old male who was unconscious on the

sidewalk. The victim's lips and fingers had a bluish discoloration and shallow respiration. His pulse was weak and he was unresponsive. While two officers stayed with the victim and monitored his breathing, a third officer responded to the nearby Public Safety Hub on the unit block of 6th Street and retrieved a Narcan Kit. In the meantime, the victim's breathing had slowed down even further. Following the application of the Narcan, the victim's breathing and pulse appeared stronger. He was transported to a local hospital and later released.

At 11:52 AM on July 18th, officers were flagged down at Golden Gate Avenue and Leavenworth Street regarding a man down on the sidewalk. The victim, a 34 year-old male, had experienced a seizure and was unresponsive. An ambulance was summoned and the officers noted that the victim had a bluish-gray skin tone and shallow respiration. The officers administered Narcan and turned over care to arriving paramedics. The victim was transported to the hospital where he recovered from an opiate overdose and was later released.

Since 2015, San Francisco Police officers have responded to 12 incidents in which Narcan kits have been used to save the lives of those experiencing an overdose. The officers involved in these incidents are eligible for nomination for a commendation from the San Francisco Police Commission. The Narcan kits have become an extremely useful tool in helping officers as first responders and in safeguarding lives. Prompt screening and assignment of 9-1-1 calls by Department of Emergency Management Dispatchers and early intervention by SFPD officers equipped with Narcan Kits combined with skilled care and transport by paramedics to an emergency room all increase the chances of survival for an overdose victim.

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