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NYMC and Westchester DOH Collaborate to Combat Opioid Overdoses

The School of Medicine Class of 2020 is fulfilling NYMC's commitment to the White House National Opioid Education Campaign and all members will be certified in the administration of Naloxone (Narcan) to help fight the epidemic of opioid and heroin overdoses by the end of the month. In collaboration with the Westchester County Department of Health, the students are being trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of an opioid or heroin overdose and learn how to administer Narcan. When administered properly, the nasal spray Narcan restores breathing that has been dangerously slowed by an overdose of an opioid or heroin. Each student will be certified for two years to administer Narcan in New York State and receive a free kit with a needleless syringe and two doses of Naloxone, courtesy of the Westchester County Department of Health.

"The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is encouraging medical schools, such as our own, to find ways to respond to the opioid epidemic that has been gripping local communities," noted School of Medicine Dean, D. Douglas Miller, M.D., C.M., M.B.A. "Like several other U.S. medical schools, we have taken a pledge to do so."

Westchester County Health Commissioner, Sherlita Amler, M.D., who led the training said it was important for physicians to understand their role in preventing and reducing opioid addiction, "As doctors, we must be mindful to weigh the benefits of pain reduction against the risks of addiction each time we prescribe pain medication and consider potential alternatives," she told the students. "Opioid addiction is a serious problem in our society."



New York Medical College students join more than 1,000 police officers and 1,000 residents whom the Westchester County Health Department has trained in this lifesaving technique as part of County Executive Robert P. Astorino's Safer Communities initiative.

"As someone actively involved with administering clinical skills sessions and Basic Life Support (BLS) certifications to our medical students and members of the local community, I believe that pairing Nalaxone and opioid reversal trainings with BLS courses shows our commitment to the AAMC's important mission. Our first training session was a success and the feedback from the students has been overwhelmingly positive. It has been an honor to collaborate with medical professionals throughout Westchester County, who are also dedicated to raising awareness on this important subject," said Katharine Yamulla, NYMC director of the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center.

The Narcan training was held in conjunction with the BLS training medical that students are required to take and eventually all NYMC School of Medicine graduates will be certified in Narcan administration.