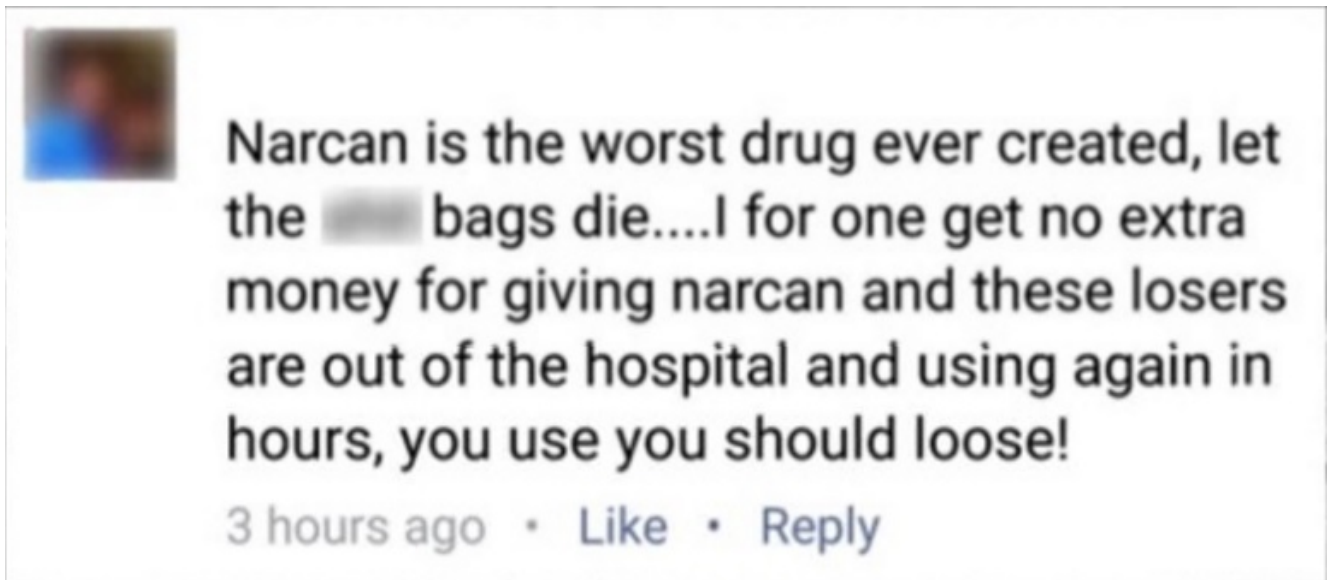


The Narcan Butterfly Effect

There is a debate that rages on social media every time Narcan comes up; do you save heroin users with Narcan or let them die? Should medical professionals be reviving heroin addicts multiple times? Ten times? There were several car accidents recently in New Bedford involving overdoses, one involving an innocent man who was crushed by an SUV while unloading his van.

Just this month a **Weymouth firefighter was suspended for 90 days** over a Facebook post against using Narcan to save addicts. Here is what he posted:



Many people believe that Narcan allows addicts to take risks knowing that they will be revived should they overdose. Police in Massachusetts are even **finding used Narcan kits in drug dealers' homes**.

Eight used Narcan kits were found in the Davidson Ave. apartment. Marhefka reportedly told police that she had dispensed the Narcan to users who overdosed in her apartment. Two unopened kits and more than 100 dirty syringes were also found at the apartment.

Most people are compassionate and believe in saving drug abusers unlimited times, or until they get help. You will hear frequently, "If it was your son, daughter, brother or sister, you'd change your tune and want to save them."

While saving addicts is a must, there is a Butterfly Effect on society.

First, there is a high cost associated with saving a person overdosing. Not only does Narcan cost the taxpayers in Massachusetts millions of dollars annually, it costs thousands of dollars every time emergency personnel arrive on the scene and save an overdosing person. When a person overdoses and someone calls 911, you will generally see police, fire and EMS personnel arrive on the scene to save the person. Additionally, if fire, police and EMS are responding to overdosing victims then resources are not only strained, they may not be available for another emergency like a fire, heart attack or care accident.

Second, overdosing victims are not only a danger to themselves, they can be a danger to the public should they overdose while driving a car. This past weekend **a man overdosed while driving a Ford F250, hitting and snapping a utility pole**. Medics arrived, administered Narcan and saved the mans life.

Last month a man seriously injured another man reportedly on the way to a methadone clinic. He was speeding down Bellville Avenue and likely passed out at the wheel colliding with a parked van, crushing one man between his SUV and the van. A second man near the van was also injured. The first victim was hurt so bad that he needed to be evacuated by helicopter to a Rhode Island hospital. The driver of the vehicle was overheard saying that he was on his way to a methadone clinic downtown.

While Narcan is a great tool to bring overdosing people back

to life, there are consequences that the rest of society must deal with, especially when overdose victims are allowed back on the street the same day. Yes, addicts overdosing are brothers, sisters, sons and daughters, but what if you save a man from overdosing and that man then cripples or kills your loved one who was simply trying to unload tools out of his/her work van? In Massachusetts, thousands of people are being saved with Narcan each year; good or bad, this has caused and will cause a Butterfly Effect that we all have to deal with.

What do you think? Is Narcan a good or bad thing for our community? Is there a limit to how many times Narcan should be used on the same patient? Or unlimited use?