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Kamloops woman helps get naloxone training going in her community

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Kamloops woman helps get naloxone training going in her community

When Kamloops' Brittany Gill found out that one of her childhood friends died of an overdose, she was struck with the need to take action.

"I just woke up and had this voice in my head that said, do something," she said.

What she decided to do was reach out to the broader community in hopes to find people who would help her run training sessions in Kamloops.

Strong community response

She put the call out on social media to find health professionals who would teach people how to use the overdose antidote naloxone in the

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hope of preventing future overdoses.

will offer two training sessions that will include teaching people how to administer the drug and perform CPR.

Naloxone acts to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and is most often injected into the person's body.

"It's important that people who may not be at risk and who may not be users, that they are trained and prepared for these kind of situations because we come across these things a lot," said Gill.

"I just kind of took it upon myself that this was really important and so many people in the community are showing me how important this is."

'Lost so many people'

One of the people who reached out to Gill after seeing her Facebook post was Kira Haug, a harm reduction coordinator with ASK Wellness. She works with drug users in the Kamloops area and has seen the need for naloxone on a day-to-day basis.

"We've lost so many people," said Haug. "The numbers are outrageous."

She's known clients who are only alive because someone was able to revive them with a shot of naloxone.

"We know it works and we know the training is important," she said. "It's a pretty disturbing time... Every number represents a human being."

Haug will be one of the people leading the upcoming training session and she hopes to see more groups in the community provide training on how to use the antidote.

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Right now, the two sessions are filled up with participants, but Gill says

According to data released by the B.C. Coroners Service in November, 622 people have died from overdoses since the beginning of the year, compared to 397 over the same time last year.

B.C. declared a public health emergency in April due to the alarming rise in the number of drug-related deaths.

With files from Daybreak Kamloops

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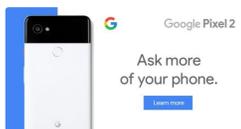


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