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Letters

LETTERS | AN ANSWER AT HAND TO REVERSE OVERDOSES

Overdose antidote should be widely available

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CHELSEA CONABOY'S article, "Antidote offers addicts' families sliver of comfort" (Page A1, March 2), brings much-needed attention to the safe and extremely successful emergency intervention that naloxone has provided to those overdosing from opioids, such as heroin, codeine, or morphine. Naloxone saves lives.

Anyone — from family members and friends to health and treatment professionals — can be trained to administer this special nasal spray drug, which quickly reverses the life-threatening respiratory and central nervous system failure from an overdose.

The sad reality is that those in recovery from opioid addiction do relapse. While naloxone, also known as Narcan, is by no means a panacea, it is an invaluable new tool in reducing overdose deaths and giving those living with the pain of addiction a new chance at recovery.

If a low-cost, effective antidote exists to help prevent accidental overdose, then we have a shared responsibility to ensure that it is easily accessible and available. Massachusetts is already leading the way when it comes to distributing naloxone. Let's lead the push to make naloxone available over the counter.

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