



St. John Ambulance Saint-Jean

SAVING LIVES SAUVER DES VIES
at work, home and play au travail, à la maison et dans les loisirs

MEDIA RELEASE

Opioid Overdose Content integrated in St. John Ambulance First Aid training programs

Ottawa, ON – May 15, 2019 –St. John Ambulance first aid training course participants will now also learn about opioids. Starting in May 2019 opioid-related content will be integrated into English and French training curriculum. St. John Ambulance is the first, first aid training organization in Canada to address this critical subject in key courses.

Participants will learn about the causes of opioid substance use, opioid risks, and how to recognize the signs of opioid overdose. Participants will also learn about key treatment for opioid overdose using Naloxone – a safe, life-saving medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of opioids in an overdose long enough to allow emergency help to arrive.

Opioid-related deaths in Canada have reached a crisis level. More people die each year from opioid related overdoses than from car crashes, according to a recent report from the National Safety Council. Health Canada reports that opioids were involved in 10,337 deaths between January 2016 and September 2018.

“Improper or illicit opioid use is devastating communities across Canada, thus we need to do everything we can to end stigma around opioid use and make our communities safer,” says Shawn McLaren, Chief Learning Officer at St. John Ambulance. “St. John Ambulance has made significant efforts to address the opioid overdose crisis, beginning with our ground-breaking work and specialized training programs in British Columbia, one of the hardest hit provinces by the crisis. Now, with the addition of an opioid overdose overview into our first aid offerings, we’re able to reach an unprecedented number of Canadians to help combat this crisis.”

St. John Ambulance trains over 500,000 people in first aid across Canada each year, according to McLaren.

“St. John Ambulance strives to continuously improve its first aid training program to Canadians to ensure it is timely and current, as we demonstrated by including Mental Health Awareness in our training courses this January.” added McLaren.

The opioid crisis is impacting people of all socioeconomic levels in rural and urban areas across Canada. Fentanyl or its derivatives are significant drivers in the majority of

National Office / Siège national | 400 - 1900 promenade City Park Drive, Ottawa ON Canada K1J 1A3
Tel/Tél. : (613) 236 - 7461 | Fax/Télé. : (613) 236 - 2425 | Email/Courriel : info@nhq.sja.ca

sja.ca

Charitable Registration No.: 89903 4730 RR0001 No d'Enr. d'Org. de Bienfaisance : 89903 4730 RR0001

St. John Ambulance is an international humanitarian organization and is a foundation of the Order of St. John
Ambulance Saint-Jean est un organisme humanitaire international et une fondation de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean





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apparent opioid-related deaths. Yet, not all opioid overdoses are a result of illicit drug use. Opioids are widely prescribed.

“Stereotypes need to be forgotten,” says McLaren. “Each of us can make a difference and get trained.”

Register for a first aid course – including CPR, AED and other lifesaving techniques – at your local St. John Ambulance, or visit sja.ca.

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ABOUT ST. JOHN AMBULANCE

St. John Ambulance is a 900-year-old humanitarian organization, and is the foundation of the Order of St. John. The charity has operated in Canada since 1883 with a mission to improve people’s health, safety, and quality of life. The charity trains over 500,000 students in Canada each year in first aid and CPR. Its volunteers also provide hundreds of thousands of hours of community service across Canada through numerous programs. All proceeds from training and product sales fund the charity’s community services, in addition to generous support from donors like you. Learn more at sja.ca.

Media Contact:

Philippe Blain, St. John Ambulance – National Office
(613) 236-1283 ext. 237
(613) 979-6611 (c)
philippe.blain@sja.ca

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Tel/Tél. : (613) 236 - 7461 | Fax/Télé. : (613) 236 - 2425 | Email/Courriel : info@nhq.sja.ca

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