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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 1, 2016
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**DUANE READE, WALGREEN CO. TO OFFER NALOXONE WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION
THROUGHOUT NEW YORK CITY**

NEW YORK—Duane Reade, Walgreen Co. will begin dispensing naloxone without a prescription in the 300 Duane Reade and Walgreens stores citywide, and approximately 450 pharmacies statewide, beginning today, bringing naloxone availability without a prescription to more than 650 pharmacies citywide.

Naloxone is a safe medication that can prevent death when administered during an opioid overdose. The Administration announced its availability at most Rite Aid and CVS stores, as well as other participating pharmacies, without a prescription under a the standing order issued by the City Health Commissioner, Dr. Mary Bassett, in December 2015.

With this new commitment from Duane Reade, Walgreen Co., New Yorkers can walk into any of more than 650 participating pharmacies to purchase naloxone and potentially save a life. For anyone who is unable to afford the insurance co-pay or the cost of naloxone, naloxone may be accessed free of charge at community-based opioid overdose prevention programs.

The Health Department strongly encourages individuals who are likely to witness an opioid overdose, including individuals at risk for opioid overdose themselves as well as their friends and family members, to learn more about overdose prevention and obtain naloxone.

“Opioid overdose is preventable – yet it continues to claim hundreds of lives in our city,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “By making naloxone even more widely available we are literally saving lives and helping New Yorkers onto the path to recovery.”

“By making naloxone widely and easily available, recovery from a narcotic overdose is now possible,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “We want those who are fighting the disease of addiction to have every medicine at their disposal so they can get well. Loved ones of those suffering from addiction should never again have to worry about not being able to find a medication that could stop their world from falling apart.”

“I applaud Duane Reade, Walgreen Co. for offering naloxone without a prescription in its New York City pharmacies. Because of its enormous capacity throughout New York City, we are now able to reach hundreds of more communities and thousands of more families plus loved ones who may need access to this lifesaving medication,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett**.

“We fully support increasing access to naloxone to help combat the ongoing public health risk of drug abuse. Duane Reade and Walgreens is pleased to dispense naloxone without requiring a prescription beginning February 1 in more than 450 drugstores in New York State, including all New York City stores,” said **Anthony Riso, RPh, Regional Healthcare Director for Duane Reade, Walgreen Co.** “While naloxone is currently available today to all of our pharmacies nationwide, we will continue to work with policy makers to increase access throughout the country.”

New Yorkers can visit nyc.gov/health and search for “Prevent Overdose” or call 311 to find a participating pharmacy and more information about overdose prevention. A site locator is also available at nyc.gov/health/sitelocator.

Pharmacists interested in dispensing naloxone under the City’s standing order can visit nyc.gov/health and search for “Pharmacy Naloxone”.

“This commitment by CVS and Duane Reade will save lives in New York,” said **Attorney General Eric Schneiderman**. “We must do all we can to make resources more accessible to give New Yorkers who have overdosed on opioids a second chance at life – and rehabilitation. Heroin addiction is a scourge in our state that can only be tackled by using every tool at our disposal.”

“I applaud Duane Reade and Walgreens for taking proactive measures in making naloxone widely accessible and readily available to anyone who may need it,” said **City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “The benefits outweigh the risks and by increasing its availability beyond emergency rooms we can help prevent fatal overdoses by treating them immediately. I would like to thank the de Blasio administration and Commissioner Bassett for taking the Council's recommendations to expand the accessibility of naloxone in the FY' 16 budget. By working together we are taking steps to help New Yorkers save lives.”

Staten Island Borough President James Oddo said, "The increased availability of Naloxone is one available tool we have to save lives. Thank you to Duane Reade and Walgreens for joining this effort. The greater availability of Naloxone will save lives."

"Combating New York City's drug abuse epidemic requires a multi-tiered approach, and making naloxone easily accessible is a crucial step. As District Attorney, I equipped every police officer on Staten Island with this life-saving treatment, and we saw tremendous results. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Washington and the de Blasio administration to advance policies to continue fighting addiction," said **Congressman Daniel Donovan**.

"I am very pleased to hear that all Duane Reade and Walgreens locations in New York City will begin to offer the life-saving drug naloxone without a prescription. The proliferation of opioid abuse across the country has reached epidemic proportions and requires immediate action on the part of both government and the private sector. Naloxone has been an effective tool in curbing opioid related overdoses, and its greater availability to the general public will undoubtedly save lives in New York City," said **Congressman Eliot Engel, Senior Member of the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee**.

"This is a great day for the people of New York City whose families are dealing with the crippling effects of addiction. While this is not a permanent fix, it will prevent the unnecessary deaths our city has seen due to opioid overdoses. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio for creating this initiative and I want to recognize Duane Reade and Walgreens for their commitment to serving to the community," said **Senator Diane J. Savino**.

“As New York City continues to battle the ongoing opiate abuse epidemic the announcement that Duane Reade and Walgreens will make naxalone (Narcan) available without a prescription is a welcome addition to this battle. With 18 locations on Staten Island alone, I applaud Duane Reade and Walgreens for partnering in this fight as we continue to seek solutions to this tragic problem. I will continue to host training sessions across Staten Island on how to administer naxalone, and urge our neighbors to equip themselves with the knowledge on how to administer naxalone in case of emergency,” said **Assembly Member Michael Cusick**.

"Naloxone is a potentially life-saving antidote that should be available for anyone to purchase. The availability of it without a prescription allows families and loved ones of individuals who are struggling with addiction to easily purchase Naloxone and keep it in case of an emergency. This medication is a great advancement that will help prevent avoidable overdoses," said **Council Member Andrew Cohen, Chair of the Committee on Mental Health**.

Council Member Vanessa Gibson, Chair of Public Safety Committee said, “Naxolone saves lives. Making this drug available without a prescription is critical to combating the rise in opioid related deaths. I thank Duane Reade and Walgreen's for acting as the City's partner in opioid harm reduction and bringing the over the counter sale of this life saving medication to nearly every community in New York. I look forward to continuing to work with Mayor de Blasio, DOHMH Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett, the NYPD, and all stakeholders as we combat the prevalence of opioid abuse in our communities and devise innovative solutions to help those most in need.

"Expanding the availability of naloxone as an over-the-counter drug at Walgreen's and Duane Reade locations will help save more lives and give us more precious time to effectively treat those suffering from opioid addiction, which has become biggest drug scourge of our generation," said **Council Minority Leader Steven Matteo.**

"We must continue to confront the reality of increasing opioid deaths in our borough. Naloxone, which was first piloted among police officers on Staten Island, has proven to be one more tool in the fight against fatal opioid overdoses. I thank Walgreens/Duane Reade – and all of the participating pharmacies, including CVS, that have previously made this commitment – for joining us in this fight and agreeing to stock naloxone at all of its stores. This increased access will surely save lives as we pursue additional strategies to stem this epidemic," said **Council Member Debi Rose.**

“The decision to purchase naloxone should be between a person and their pharmacist. I’m glad logistical boundaries are being removed so that people who need it can store it in their homes and have it at the ready in an emergency,” said **Council Member Joe Borelli.**

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