

Stearns County Deputies Get Narcan, Thanks to St. Cloud Father



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A St. Cloud father is making it his life's mission to help others, and he's doing so in a big way.

He bought Narcan for every deputy in Stearns County, this after his son accidentally overdosed on pain medication.

His goal is to save just one, just one family who doesn't have to experience what he has.

"Justin was a real bright spot to his friends and family, he had a beautiful smile and was always excited," Dan Pearson said about his son.



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Christmas Day will mark 10 years since Pearson talked to or held his 24-year-old son Justin.

After a four-wheeler accident caused serious injuries, Justin was prescribed pain medication and quickly became addicted.

Two years later, he accidentally overdosed.

"As much as we don't understand it and wish things would be different, what we're not going to do is sit back and let this happen to others," Pearson said.

It's why he paid \$6,000 to outfit every Stearns County deputy with Narcan, or as he calls it a miracle medicine.

"We've got something that will save lives, and save lives immediately and we're ecstatic about it," he said.

"These are so simple and you don't have to puncture the skin or anything," Stearns County Chief Deputy Bruce Bechtold said.

Deputies will use a nasal spray.

Bechtold says the nationwide push to make Narcan available means you can't even buy this right now.

"We bought the last three cases of 24 per case, they didn't have any left anymore," he said.

Getting this into the more rural parts of the county will be huge, he added.

Each deputy will have a box with two sprays. The box costs \$60, but Pearson says he plans to outfit every law enforcement officer and first responder in the county with Narcan.

"We're budgeting \$30,000 for the county, if it becomes more, it's more, whatever that number may be. What's important right now is that we get this tool into people's hands that can save lives," Pearson said.

Stearns County has 60 deputies, they will each get Narcan this week, and can start using it right away, if necessary.

A state law was passed in Justin's honor in 2008.

It makes it more difficult for people to purchase addictive prescription drugs over the internet by requiring a face-to-face visit with a doctor.

Pharmacies can also face penalties.

At one point, Justin was getting pills from more than 17 different websites.

Credits

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