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## Cigna Foundation Grant Will Help Hartford Public Library Assist Opioid Overdose Victims

**(HARTFORD, CT: January 7, 2019)** A \$10,000 grant from the Cigna Foundation will help Hartford Public Library (HPL) staff with the training and supplies they need to assist victims of opioid drug overdoses. Like many libraries across the country, HPL is on the front lines of the increasingly widespread and deadly opioid drug abuse crisis. HPL's board adopted a proactive response to the problem in November 2018, which is focused on response and prevention. The Cigna Foundation grant will greatly assist in putting that response into practice.

"As a public institution, we see that our entire community is impacted by the opioid crisis; it was clear that a rapid and robust response to the problems caused by the opioid drug crisis was imperative," said HPL CEO Bridget Quinn-Carey. "Hartford police, fire and ambulance personnel have been wonderful in helping us deal with overdose situations, but we also want to be ready for instances when emergency services cannot arrive in time. By training staff members who volunteer for the training, and having the necessary supplies on-site we are doing all we can to prepare for situations when a delay of just few minutes or even seconds can mean the difference between life and death."

"Libraries like HPL are increasingly innovating around health education. We are proud to support this potentially life-saving initiative and commend HPL for its efforts to battle substance use disorders in our communities," said Mary Engvall, executive director, Cigna Foundation.

The grant from the Cigna Foundation will support staff training. In addition to training in administering naloxone, HPL staff will be invited to participate in trauma-informed care training and CPR training.

The funding will also be used to procure supplies, primarily naloxone (often referred to by its brand-name, Narcan), and CPR, supplies such as masks and mouth guards.

HPL will be working with the Greater Hartford Harm Reduction Coalition to provide public education sessions and information forums as well as staff training.

HPL is planning to offer opioid abuse awareness materials at all library locations and on the HPL website. Staff will also be working with local social service agencies and medical institutions in order to provide the most up to date information and effective referrals to those suffering or recovering from substance abuse, and to provide information and referrals for concerned family members.

“We strive to ensure that our community has access to information and services that are important to them, and to provide a supportive environment for learning. Thank you to the Cigna Foundation for providing us with the financial resources to help us accomplish this,” said Quinn-Carey.

## **ABOUT HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Now celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. With seven locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. Please visit [www.hplct.org](http://www.hplct.org).