Members of the Montcalm Prevention Collaborative were able to see and touch the nasal spray Narcan — the brand name for naloxone, which helps with opioid overdoses — during Wednesday’s meeting, which included a presentation by Jay Wilson, a pharmaceutical representative for Adapt, the company which manufactures Narcan.

**Overcoming opioid abuse**

**Montcalm Prevention Collaborative discusses naloxone and drug use**

**By Meghan Nelson**

**Daily News staff writer**

*STANTON — On Wednesday, law enforcement officers, health officials, community organization leaders and concerned residents gathered to discuss the heroin and opioid problem facing Montcalm County.*

The Montcalm Prevention Collaborative is looking for ways to make naloxone — which can reverse the effects of opioid overdoes — available to residents as well as finding ways to prevent drug use. The Montcalm Care Network is able to provide naloxone to anyone 18 or older who visits the Stanton office and completes training. The Montcalm Care Network has distributed the drug to law enforcement officers throughout the county. The collaborative hopes to continue making an impact on how opioid prescriptions are prescribed by requiring them to be co-prescribed with naloxone.

Phil Millerov, a mental health therapist with the Montcalm Care Network, presented an evidence-based packet, which physician assistant Kate Behrenwald created to address opioid use. The packet reviews issues such as managing opioid prescriptions, drug screening, disposal and co-prescription. Behrenwald’s suggestion is patients who have a prescription for opioids be co-prescribed naloxone if they meet any of the following criteria:

- An opioid prescription greater than 50 milligrams morphine equivalents per day.
- A respiratory disease or risk factor, such as smoking, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma or sleep apnea.
- Starting medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder.
- Received emergency medical care involving opioid intoxication or overdose.
- A suspected history of substance abuse or non-medical opioid use.
- Difficult access to prompt emergency medical services.
- Voluntary request from a patient or their caregiver.

“We need to talk to our medical providers and co-prescribing naloxone,” Millerov said. “It doesn’t mean you need to have to buy the script. But, you have access to it, and it starts the

From left, Marcus Cheatham, health officer with the Mid-Michigan District Health Department; Dennis Magirl, interim director of the Greenville Department of Public Safety; Montcalm County Sheriff Mike Williams; Michigan State Police Sgt. Bradley Campbell; and Phil Millerov, mental health therapist with Montcalm Care Network, pose for a photograph after the departments received plaques Wednesday for their work in fighting drug use in Montcalm County.