

Methadone Prescribing Guidance for CTU Patients

- Continuation of Methadone therapy at discharge for patients chronically on methadone, either for pain control or substance abuse, represents an important transition period for many CTU patients
- Resuming outpatient therapy over the weekend can be challenging and represents a potential gap in care

Suggested Approach:

NB: Ontario no longer requires MDs to have a specific license to prescribe methadone.

1. Discharges on Monday to Thursday - administer dose for the day of discharge in hospital, and provide a one day prescription for methadone at discharge
 2. On Friday or Saturday - administer dose for the day of discharge in hospital, and provide a prescription through to and including Monday (2-3 day prescription)
 3. On the prescription, specify the exact date and time of the last witnessed dose, and the exact dates for which the script is valid (ex. April 19 to 21, 2023, inclusive). Under "directions" write "Daily witnessed ingestion. Hold if sedated."
 4. Prescriptions should be faxed directly the patient's pharmacy. If the script falls on a weekend or holiday, ensure that the pharmacy will be open. If not, either ask the patient to select an alternate pharmacy (if feasible) or, if the patient historically has been prescribed take home doses on Sundays/major holidays (check ConnectingOntario), it is reasonable to prescribe as a take-home dose by writing "Take home dose for [date] only. All other doses as daily witnessed ingestion."
 5. Call the patient's outpatient methadone provider to notify them of the patient's discharge, and copy them on the discharge summary. Local methadone providers include...
 - **Street Health: 613-549-1440**
 - ACT Division St. site: 613-544-0228
 - ACT Princess St. site: 613-766-0798
 - Change Health Care: 613-549-6060
 - Solutions Health Care: 613-766-2224
- *If the patient is unsure of who prescribes their methadone, check ConnectingOntario
6. If you are unsure about how to safely discharge a patient on methadone, you may contact the Substance Treatment and Rehabilitation Team (START) Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm (listed under Psychiatry Consult Liaison on the Switchboard On Call schedule)