

MATOD Service Continuity Checklist for Pharmacies:

Preparedness Planning in the Event of Urgent Closure in the context of COVID-19

The following strategies are for information and consideration by pharmacies currently providing Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence (MATOD, i.e. methadone & buprenorphine/naloxone), to prepare for a potential urgent pharmacy and/or MATOD program closure and the subsequent cessation of MATOD services.

These strategies have been developed by the [Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Networks](#) in consultation with key MATOD stakeholders and experts.

Preparedness Planning

- Identify closest MATOD pharmacy(ies) that could take on your patients in the event of an immediate closure. Contact them to create a “support network” to prepare for this scenario. The Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Networks (details below) are available to assist you to identify MATOD pharmacies in your area.
- Ensure you have up-to-date contact details of all MATOD patients and ask patients to save your pharmacy’s phone number in their mobile phones. If they don’t have a mobile phone, provide patients with a pharmacy business card.
- Ensure you have a recent quality colour photograph of each patient with their record (endorsed by the prescriber if possible), to assist another dosing point to be able to confirm the patient’s identity.
- Remind patients to have ID available at all times, if possible (preferably photo ID)
- Ensure that at the close of each day the following has been documented accurately for each MATOD patient by the pharmacist on duty:
 - Details of the most recent supervised dose,
 - Details of the number of take-away doses dispensed,
 - Whether patients have not attended, and
 - Up-to-date payment details (the date and amount of the most recent payment made)
- Consider a process for transfer of dosing records to a new dosing pharmacy
 - If your records are hard-copy daily dosing books:
 - Physical transfer of the records is preferable and recommended (e.g. pharmacist transports these to the new dosing pharmacy)
 - If physical transfer is not possible (e.g. due to long distances or emergencies) take all reasonable steps to ensure the new dosing pharmacy has access to the latest dosing records and key patient information. For example, the patient ID/information page, current dosing page and current script for each client could be photographed and shared electronically with the new dosing pharmacy

- If your records are all electronic, consider:
 - How these could be accessed remotely and what information would be needed for remote access,
 - If the latest dosing records could be printed for hard copy transfer to another site, and
 - Daily computer/software back-up processes, ensuring they in place and occurring regularly.
- Consider processes for transfer of the following items to a new dosing pharmacy, as they may not have stock in place for the added volume of clients:
 - Transfer of MATOD stockⁱ (i.e. all methadone and buprenorphine/naloxone),
 - Transfer of takeaway bottles,
 - Transfer of take-home naloxone
 - Transfer of any other daily dosing medicationsⁱ, dose administration aids, and related scripts that are held at the pharmacy and usually dispensed with MATOD.

Consider how and by whom these would be transferred (e.g. pharmacist transports these to the new dosing pharmacy along with the dosing records).

In the event of pharmacy and/or MATOD program closure

- Identify suitable alternative dosing pharmacy
- Inform the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Drug Policy Unit. Contact Maureen Chesler on 9096 9170, 0418 221 452 or maureen.chesler@dhhs.vic.gov.au
- Contact prescribers to inform them of change of dosing location, or if you are unwell request assistance from DHHS or the Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Networks (details below) to manage this
- Contact patients/clients to inform them of change of dosing location. Ensure there is minimal delay between the closure of your MATOD program and the commencement of dosing for your patients at the alternative pharmacy.
- Provide all patients/clients with the contact details of the Pharmacotherapy Advocacy, Mediation and Support service (PAMS, 1800 443 844) and advise consumers to call PAMS if they are unable to be dosed at an alternative site.
- Contact Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Networks for local communication of closure and support (details below)
- Place signage on the pharmacy door to direct patients to the new dosing pharmacy
- Transfer all required patient records, medication and scripts to new dosing pharmacy, including:
 - **Daily dosing record, especially details of the last dose**

- **Recent quality colour photograph, endorsed by the prescriber if possible**
 - **Current MATOD script**
 - MATOD stockⁱ (i.e. all methadone and buprenorphine/naloxone),
 - Takeaway bottles,
 - Take-home naloxone,
 - Any other daily dosing medicationsⁱ, dose administration aids, and related scripts that are held at the pharmacy and dispensed with MATOD
- Remain available to assist the new dosing point with any questions, if possible.

Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Networks

Your local Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Network is able to assist you to identify pharmacy(ies) who may be able to take on your patients in the event of an immediate closure.

Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Network contact details:

| Area | Phone | Email |
|---|---|--|
| Barwon South West | 03 5564 5815 | gabrielle.watt@westvicphn.com.au |
| Grampians Loddon Mallee | 03 5338 9142 | PaulineMo@bchc.org.au |
| Gippsland | 0458 693 094 0409 588 415 | Sean.Taylor-Lyons@lchs.com.au Elizabeth.Plunkett@lchs.com.au |
| Hume | 0418 910 200 | TGriffiths@primarycareconnect.com.au |
| Southern and Eastern Melbourne (Area 4) | 0436 031 887 (southern) 0429 808 317 (eastern) 0428 785 371 (manager) | michael.abelman@semphn.org.au adrian.may@semphn.org.au jana.dostal@semphn.org.au |
| North West Melbourne | 0439 436 772 | pharmacotherapy@cohealth.org.au |

More information about the Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Networks can be found at www.pabn.org.au.

ⁱ Section 13(3) of the Drugs Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 authorises a pharmacist to supply scheduled poisons to another pharmacy – “Where a pharmacist sells or supplies by wholesale to another pharmacist a poison or controlled substance or drug of dependence for use by the other pharmacist in the lawful practice of his profession as a pharmacist, the sale or supply shall for the purposes of subsection (1) be regarded as a sale or supply in the lawful practice of his profession by the first-mentioned pharmacist”. All such transactions would need to be recorded in accordance with the provisions of Part 13 of the Drugs Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017. Specified records are required to be retained for 3 years. The current version of the relevant Act and the Regulations can be found here: www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/drugs-and-poisons.