**Consideration and guidance for prescribing methadone to patients with opioid dependence**

**Never prescribe on subjective withdrawals alone. It is appropriate to withhold medication until objective withdrawals are observed.**

If opioid withdrawals persist, daily increments of 10mg can be given over the next 3 days. Twice daily prescribing, 12 hours apart is indicated for the first 2 days.

**Do not exceed more than 60mg before seeking advice from Pavilions**

**Never give methadone to a patient who is intoxicated**

***Most opioid*** ***patients will be comfortably maintained on 40-60 mg daily***

Observe for signs of drug use e.g track marks or opioid withdrawals e.g. anxiety / agitation / sweating / piloerection / lacrimation / dilated pupils / stomach cramps

Can a drug screen urine test be performed?

Gain clinical history of patients opioid use and ascertain if there may be dependence / prescribing needs

Refer to Pavilions Substance misuse nurses Jo / Mim / Vicky on ext 7826 who can help with managing the patient.

If we are not present and patient is resident in Brighton & Hove please call Pavilions during office hours to confirm if client is known to them and if there is any current community prescribing of methadone or buprenorphine on (01273) 731900.

**Out of hours please follow this algorhythm**

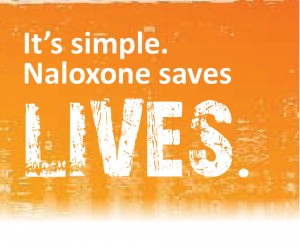
For out of area patients please see contact details below.

Perform a urine test to check for evidence of opioids

When opioid withdrawals are apparent an initial dose of 10-20mg of methadone 1mg/1ml should be prescribed. Never give more than 20mg as an initial dose to avoid overdose

Observe over the next 3-4 hours for signs of intoxication or ongoing withdrawals. If still withdrawing after 4-6 hours a further 10-20mg can be given.

**Never give more than 40mg in the first 24 hours**



Yes

No

**PLEASE ENSURE A TAKE-OUT A PRENOXAD (NALOXONE) MINIJET IS GIVEN TO ANYONE AT RISK OF OPIOID OD & PLEASE CONTACT THE LIAISON NURSES OR PAVILIONS FOR ADVICE AROUND DISCHARGE**

**W. & Mid Sx Drug & Alcohol services: CGL -** 0300 303 8677 /**E. Sx. Drug & Alcohol services: CGL -** [0300 30 38 160](tel:0300%2030%2038%20160)