


Methadone Dispensing Incidents: Contributing Factors, Key Learnings and Important Resources

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 Pharmacy Connection

This resource highlights key points from the Pharmacy Connection article *Methadone Dispensing: Learning from Recent Incidents*. Any error involving methadone is a significant risk to patient safety.

CONSIDER THESE POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO RECENT MEDICATION INCIDENTS INVOLVING METHADONE:



Equipment limitations for low dose prescriptions



Wide range of therapeutically appropriate doses







Misinterpretation of the prescription volume



Pharmacists acting in a temporary or relief position in the pharmacy

ASSESS YOUR OWN PRACTICE AND IDENTIFY ANY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT, WHICH COULD INCLUDE:

-  Creating, amending and/or reviewing written policies and procedures at the pharmacy specific to issues that may arise with the dispensing of methadone to ensure consistency of care
-  Designing the dispensing workflow to allow for multiple checks to verify correct entry, dose preparation and labelling
-  Ensuring that every prescription has been assessed for therapeutic appropriateness prior to being dispensed and that standards of practice on patient assessment and documentation are met
-  Verifying that staff have the necessary and up-to-date knowledge, skills and judgment to provide MMT before they engage in dispensing

ENSURE YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH KEY RESOURCES RELATED TO METHADONE DISPENSING:

- [Key Requirements for Methadone Maintenance Treatment Fact Sheet](#)
- [Opioid Policy](#)
- [Opioid Agonist Maintenance Treatment: A Pharmacist's Guide to Methadone and Buprenorphine for Opioid Use Disorders \(CAMH\)](#)
- [Opioids and Opioid Use Disorder Practice Tool](#)