

PRESCRIBING S8 OPIOIDS AND DRUGS OF DEPENDENCE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Applications and notifications to: *Pharmaceutical Services Branch (PSB)*
P.O. Box 125 Hobart 7001. Ph (03) 62 332064 Fax (03) 62 333904

Patient requires and/or requests opioids

Patient is:

- Drug Dependent
- Prescribed Fentanyl or hydromorphone

Application for an authority to prescribe is required IMMEDIATELY

Decision made to prescribe Patient requires opioids for more than 2 months

Application for an authority under Section 59E of the Poisons Act is required

NOTE: Authority required whether or not the prescription is written on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme

- Send a 59E application form to PSB for authority to prescribe.
- Relevant specialist reports endorsing opioid treatment and dose to be sent with 59E application.
- If patient has drug dependency the notice of drug dependency must be included with the authority application.

If the prescriber treats or has previously treated/prescribed to the patient and the patient

- Has history of drug seeking
- Is exhibiting drug – seeking behaviour
- Uses opioid medication and/or medications such as benzodiazepines, tramadol or panadeine forte contrary to prescribing instructions (e.g. injects, increases dose).

Immediate notification required to PSB under S59B. (Legal requirement)

Authority issued to prescriber under S59E

Authority is:

- for the particular patient
- Drug, dose, formulation and time specific
- Mandatory supply or dosing requirements may be applied where necessary
- Ongoing prescribing cannot legally occur without a S59E authority

Concurrent prescribing of alprazolam (a specified substance) with an opioid
Prescribing of alprazolam with an opioid requires an authority under S59E after one month's prescribing.

Authorities will not be issued if patient has a history of drug seeking, drug abuse/ misuse, is drug dependent or is on or has been on the opioid pharmacotherapy program.
Ref- RACP Prescription Opioid Policy 2009

PRESCRIBERS MUST NOT:

1. Make available without an authority under S59E prescribed schedule 8 substances to persons who are:
 - * Drug dependent or
 - * Exhibiting drug seeking behaviour or
 - * Misusing drugs of dependence (e.g. opioids/benzodiazepines) or
 - * Where an authority has expired.
2. Prescribe drugs of dependence (e.g benzodiazepines) or a specified substance (alprazolam) if they are:
 - * aware of, or
 - * have been notified that an authority has been issued to another prescriber for that patient (unless acting for that prescriber).

Note: exemptions apply for hospitals, treatment centres and a 'one-off treatment' for an acute medical emergency