Information for Pharmacists

UPDATED - Background and Frequently Asked Questions - Methadone

Effective August 5, 2021

Please include this Procedure in your Drug Programs Information Network (DPIN) Manual under Section 4: Claims Submission.

- Updates to the Claims Submission Procedure – Methadone come into effect August 5, 2021.

- As communicated in Bulletin #112 effective August 5, 2021:

  The following methadone products will be listed as unrestricted Part 1 benefits:
  - JAMP methadone (sugar free) 10 mg/ml oral concentrate – DIN 02495783
  - ODAN methadone (cherry flavored) 10 mg/ml oral concentrate – DIN 02495872
  - ODAN methadone (sugar free, unflavored) 10 mg/ml oral concentrate – DIN 02495880
  - SANDOZ methadone (sugar free, cherry flavored) 10 mg/ml oral concentrate – DIN 02481979

  Methadose and Metadol-D will be listed as a Part 2 benefits:
  - Methadose* 10 mg/ml oral liquid – 02394596
  - Methadose* Sugar Free 10mg/ml oral liquid – 02394618
  - Metadol-D** 10 mg/ml oral concentrate – 02244290

- As communicated in Bulletin #84 effective October 22, 2015, methadone Powder for Compound (PIN 00909190) has been delisted.

Are methadone, Methadose and/or Metadol-D interchangeable?

- **NONE of the methadone, Methadose and/or Metadol-D 10 mg/ml Concentrate products are interchangeable with one another. Health Canada issued a safety alert in July 2020 advising that that there may be a link between switching methadone-containing products used to treat opioid use disorder and the risk of lack of effect, which may present as withdrawal symptoms, which can lead to serious harms.**

- Pharmacists should refer to The College of Pharmacists of Manitoba (CPhM) for further information. CPhM's document Opioid Agonist Therapy Guidelines for Manitoba Pharmacists is available online.

How should I interpret the Part 2 prescribing criteria: "For treatment of patients who (a) are being treated with Methadose" / "For treatment of patients who (a) are being treated with Metadol-D"?

- While the following scenarios provide guidance, the pharmacist has the responsibility to use their professional judgement and discretion. The pharmacist's assessment, along with the reasons behind their decisions, should be documented clearly and thoroughly in a way that allows for the department and/or the College of Pharmacists of Manitoba to conduct audits if needed.

- Patients are **eligible** for Part 2 EDS under criteria (a) for Methadose (or Metadol-D, respectively) if:
    - They are actively being dispensed a prescription for Methadose / Metadol-D
    - They are restarting methadone with a new prescription after missing a short amount of time (e.g., a few days) and were previously taking Methadose (or Metadol-D)
    - They switched to a methadone product covered under Part I for a short period of time (e.g., a few days) without stopping and were previously taking Methadose / Metadol-D

- Patients are **not eligible** for Part 2 EDS under criteria (a) for Methadose (or Metadol-D, respectively), if they are not currently being dispensed an active prescription – for example:
    - They are restarting methadone with a new prescription after missing a long period of time (e.g., one year), and were previously taking Methadose / Metadol-D

Why is the quantity in DPIN being entered in millilitres (ml) and not milligrams (mg)?

- All methadone, Methadose and Metadol-D 10 mg/ml Concentrate prescriptions are to be entered in the DPIN in millilitres. The entry in millilitres (ml) is consistent with the DPIN entry requirement for all other liquid formulations of products. The ml entry is also consistent with the entry methodology in other provincial jurisdictions, which addresses prior safety issues through a more consistent and accurate documentation of the quantity, strength and number of days' supply of methadone, Methadose or Metadol-D provided to the patient in the DPIN history. By using the Drug Identification Number (DIN) of the product, DPIN can also provide drug interaction information.

Are methadone, Methadose or Metadol-D 10 mg/ml Concentrate covered for chronic pain?

- Effective August 5, 2021, methadone will be listed on the Manitoba Formulary as an unrestricted Part 1 benefit; and Methadose and Metadol-D will be listed as Part 2 benefits where coverage criteria will apply.

Do we need to dilute the methadone, Methadose or Metadol-D 10 mg/ml Concentrate?

- Pharmacists should refer to The College of Pharmacists of Manitoba (CPhM) for further information. CPhM's document Opioid Agonist Therapy Guidelines for Manitoba Pharmacists is available online.

When we bill the methadone, Methadose and/or Metadol-D stock solution, do we submit the claim as a regular drug product or should we bill it as a compound?

- The practice of diluting methadone, Methadose or Metadol-D 10 mg/ml Concentrate with any diluent, including crystalline solution, is not compounding and is not eligible for reimbursement as an extemporaneous compound. All prescriptions must be billed using the appropriate DIN.

How am I paid for methadone, Methadose and/or Metadol-D 10 mg/ml Concentrate; what should my professional fee be?

- The Claims Submission Procedure – Methadone notes that pharmacists are to bill for the cost of the drug plus one professional fee. If you have a fee structure for methadone, Methadose and/or Metadol-D 10 mg/ml Concentrate, whereby the fee may vary depending on the days' supply provided, and whereby the same fee(s) would be charged to a cash paying customer, this is acceptable.

- The pharmacy will not be reimbursed for the cost of the diluent that is used to prepare the methadone, Methadose, or Metadol-D dose for the patient.

We get a lot of pain management people taking different doses - 1mg/ml, 5mg/ml, 10mg/ml and 50mg/ml. How could they continue receiving their pain medication if only the 10mg/ml is covered?

- Effective August 5, 2021, methadone will be listed on the Manitoba Formulary as an unrestricted Part 1 benefit; and Methadose and Metadol-D will be listed as Part 2 benefits where coverage criteria will apply.
- Methadone, Methadose and Metadol-D Concentrate are manufactured in a 10 mg/ml strength to allow for easy conversion.

Our pharmacy system software is not designed with a decimal place for the quantity dispensed. How can I input the correct quantity of 7.5ml for a 75mg dose?

- Please contact your pharmacy software vendor to activate the decimal point on your software if necessary. Software vendors have confirmed that decimal points can be accommodated on software systems.

If your questions are not answered by reviewing the Claims Submission Procedures and FAQs posted at:
https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/pharmacare/healthprofessionals.html

Please send an e-mail to PDPInfoAudit@gov.mb.ca.