EXCLUSION FROM INJECTABLE OPIOID AGONIST THERAPY PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE

- To provide health care providers with direction regarding situations that would warrant excluding a patient from accessing the Injectable Opioid Agonist Therapy (iOAT) program.

PRINCIPLE

Minimizing barriers to access this health care service is vital to ensure those who are most likely to benefit from iOAT treatment will not be deterred from participating. Health care providers shall offer a low-threshold harm reduction approach to the treatment whenever possible. However, there may be circumstances where it is necessary to refuse or discontinue access to the treatment at a site or clinic.

APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, Students, Volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).

ELEMENTS

1. Reasons for Exclusion of Service

   1.1 A patient may be refused access to iOAT treatment for the following reasons:

   a) the patient does not meet program eligibility criteria for the treatment;

   b) the patient has been temporarily excluded (see Section 2);
2. Exclusion of Service

2.1 Exclusion of service should be a health care team decision and may be imposed for patient non-adherence to the iOAT program expectations as outlined below:

a) Exclusion of service for less than 24 hours may be imposed by the Care Manager or delegate in consultation with the health care team for the following reasons, including but not limited to:

   (i) the patient is threatening or violent toward staff, patients, visitors or support people;

   (ii) the patient refuses to follow staff direction; and/or

   (iii) there is evidence that the patient is selling, buying or sharing illicit substances at the site.

b) Exclusion of service for a period over 24 hours may be imposed by the Care Manager or delegate in consultation with the health care team for the following reasons, including but not limited to:

   (i) repeated or serious threats of violence; and/or

   (ii) the patient has received more than one (1) exclusion of service for a period of 24 hours.

c) Regaining access to the iOAT treatment after exclusion for a period of less than or greater than 24 hours may only be granted by the Care Manager or delegate after consultation with the health care team.

2.2 If at any time, a situation arises that cannot be de-escalated, staff shall notify Protective Services and use non-violent crisis intervention strategies. Protective Services should determine whether to involve the police in consultation with the Care manager or delegate.

3. Responsibilities When Initiating An Exclusion Of Service

3.1 Upon initiating an exclusion of service, the Care Manager or delegate shall inform the patient verbally and in writing:
a) that they have been excluded;
b) the reason for their exclusion;
c) when (e.g., date and time) they can return to the site for treatment; and
d) the process, if any, by which they shall be granted re-entry.

3.2 The patient shall be offered oral opioid agonist therapy for treatment during the patient’s period of exclusion as ordered by the authorized prescriber.

3.3 When a patient is excluded for a period over 24 hours, the Care Manager or delegate shall create an action plan for treatment and follow-up with the authorized prescriber and the team, including clear expectations for the patient’s return, and document this action plan on the patient’s health record. Whenever possible, the Care Manager or delegate shall create this plan in consultation and partnership with the patient.

3.4 The Care Manager or delegate shall document and inform staff of any exclusions of service that may be imposed and any associated patient action plans.

4. Complaint Management

4.1 If a patient brings forward a concern, the AHS Patient Concerns Resolution Policy suite shall be followed.

DEFINITIONS

Authorized prescriber means a health care professional who is permitted by Federal and Provincial legislation, their regulatory college, Alberta Health Services, and practice setting (where applicable) to prescribe medications.

Health care provider means any person who provides goods or services to a patient, inclusive of health care professionals, staff, students, volunteers and other persons acting on behalf of or in conjunction with AHS.

Health record means the Alberta Health Services legal record of the patient's diagnostic, treatment and care information.

Illicit substances means illegally obtained drugs that are used for non-medical purposes.

Injectable Opioid Agonist Therapy (iOAT) means the provision of supervised injectable hydromorphone as a treatment option for patients with severe opioid use disorder (OUD) that have been previously unsuccessful with current opioid agonist therapy options including oral medications (e.g., Methadone, Suboxone).

Patient means an adult or child who receives or has requested health care or services from Alberta Health Services and its health care providers or individuals authorized to act on behalf of Alberta Health Services. This term is inclusive of residents, clients, and outpatients.
REFERENCES

- Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
  - *Patient Concerns Resolution Policy* (#PRR-02)
  - *Patient Concerns Resolution Process Procedure* (#PRR-02-01)

VERSION HISTORY

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