

AIMING FOR BEST PRACTICE: QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES IN OPIOID PHARMACOTHERAPY PRESCRIBING IN WA

Teena Olsen¹

¹ *Community Pharmacotherapy Program, Next Step Drug & Alcohol Services, West Australia, Australia*

Issue: In West Australia the Community Program for Opioid Pharmacotherapy (CPOP) is provided through more than 80 government and community-based prescribers. Achieving consistent and safe prescribing practices across a wide range of services is essential for the quality assurance of the program.

Approach: Training, support and procedures to assess individual treatment plans are provided through the Community Pharmacotherapy Program to enable WA medical practitioners to prescribe methadone and buprenorphine in accordance with the *WA Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Methadone and Buprenorphine in the Treatment of Opioid Dependence*. The policy and procedures outline the assessment, induction, monitoring and review of CPOP patients and detail program parameters and requirements for their type of pharmacotherapy, dose levels and supervision requirements. To support CPOP prescribers the Clinical Advisory Service provides telephone advice and information. To maintain the quality assurance of the program CPOP prescribers in WA undertake reaccreditation every three years. The CPOP Clinical Review Committee reviews applications where individual treatment plans require approval or exemption from program policies. Clinical audits of practice are also undertaken to ensure compliance with the WA policies.

Key Findings: Consistency of clinical practice across opioid pharmacotherapy prescribers can be enhanced through education, monitoring and support strategies.

Conclusion: The allocation of resources to the planning and coordinating of prescriber training, education, monitoring and clinical support improves prescriber compliance and ensures high quality care for clients receiving opioid pharmacotherapy treatment.

Disclosure of interest statement: none