MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE

MH 71:03/23-11 MOH Circular No. 33/2024

08 May 2024

All Healthcare Service Providers Licensed Under the Healthcare Services Act 2020

**CESSATION FOR SUBMISSION OF DISPENSING DATA FOR METHADONE & SOVENOR IN HEALTHCARE APPLICATION & LICENSING PORTAL**

This circular updates all licensees under the Healthcare Services Act 2020 ("**HCSA**") on MOH's revised approach on the requirement for licensees to submit dispensing data for Methadone and Sovenor Transdermal patch ("Sovenor") through MOH's Healthcare Application & Licensing Portal ("**HALP**")[1].

2. Currently, for each dispensation of Methadone and Sovenor, licensees are required to submit the dispensing data through HALP. This is in accordance with the circulars "Restrictions on Use of Methadone" and "Guidelines on Sovenor" circulated to licensees on 3 June 2008 and 11 April 2016 respectively. The 2 circulars are enclosed at Annexes A and B.

3. Based on the current prescribing practices for Methadone and Sovenor, MOH has reviewed and revised the requirement for licensees to submit dispensing data of Methadone and Sovenor. **With immediate effect, licensees are no longer required to submit the dispensing data through HALP.**

4. Notwithstanding the revised approach, licensees are reminded to comply with all other requirements under the HCSA and its Regulations. In particular, licensees are required to maintain proper and accurate records of each medicinal product prepared, dispensed and administered in accordance with a prescription that is issued by a medical practitioner, as required under Section 27(1)[2] of the HCSA and Regulation 29(2)[3] of the Healthcare Services (General) Regulations 2021. Licensees

[1] HALP has replaced the e-Licensing for Healthcare (eLIS) portal with effect from 13 December 2022.

[2] Section 27(1) of the Healthcare Services Act 2020
(1) A licensee must keep and maintain records, for the prescribed period and in the prescribed manner, where the records are relevant to the monitoring or evaluation of any aspect of any licensable healthcare service or the provision of any licensable healthcare service.

[3] Regulation 29(2) of the Healthcare Services (General) Regulations 2021
(2) A licensee must establish and implement processes to ensure—

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are also reminded to abide by the recommendations in the "National Guidelines For The Safe Prescribing Of Opioids 2021", enclosed at Annex C. MOH may from time to time, conduct random audits of the medical records and also monitor sales from importers, to determine the appropriateness and volume of Methadone and Sovenor prescribing. Any inappropriate or inordinate prescribing of such prescriptions will be investigated, and medical practitioners may be referred to the Singapore Medical Council for disciplinary actions.

5. MOH would like to urge all medical practitioners to, as far as possible, use analgesics other than Methadone and Sovenor. Except for terminal patients with cancer pain, all other patients should be treated with the minimum appropriate dose of Methadone and Sovenor. If suspected of Methadone and Sovenor abuse, such patients should be referred to the National Addictions Management Programme.

6. All medical practitioners are also reminded that, should they suspect any of their patients developing an addiction to any drug, they are required under Regulation 19[4] of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations to notify within 7 days of the patient's attendance to the Director-General of Health and the Director of the Central Narcotics Bureau via https://www.eservices.cnb.gov.sg/enotif/. The circular on the "Notification of Suspected Drug Addicts via eNOTIF Only" is enclosed at Annex D.

(a) that every medicinal product or health product is accurately prepared, dispensed and administered in accordance with a prescription that is issued by —
  (i) a dentist;
  (ii) a medical practitioner; or
  (iii) a collaborative prescribing practitioner in accordance with a collaborative practice agreement; and
(b) the keeping and maintenance of proper and accurate records of each medicinal product or health product prepared, dispensed or administered under sub-paragraph (a).

[4] Regulation 19 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations
A medical practitioner who attends to a person whom he considers or has reasonable grounds to suspect is a drug addict shall, within 7 days from the date of attendance, furnish to both the Director of Medical Services and the Director of the Central Narcotics Bureau the following information relating to that person, through such means as may be specified by the Director of the Central Narcotics Bureau:
(a) name;
(b) identity card number;
(c) sex;
(d) age;
(e) address;
(f) the drug to which the person is believed to be addicted; and
(g) the grounds on which the medical practitioner considers or has reasonable grounds to suspect that the person is a drug addict, which may include –
  (i) the frequency and dates the medical practitioner, or any other medical practitioner working in the same hospital as him, has attended to the person;
  (ii) the physical symptoms of the person; and
  (iii) the amount and types of prescriptions requested by, or provided to, the person at the hospital in which the medical practitioner works.

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7. Please disseminate this information to relevant medical practitioners and pharmacists in your institution for their attention.

8. For any further enquiries, you may contact MOH at HCSA_Enquiries@moh.gov.sg.

9. Thank you.

ADJ A/PROF (DR) RAYMOND CHUA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH
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FOR DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH

Annexes

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| Annex A | Restrictions on Use of Methadone |
| Annex B | Guidelines on Sovenor |
| Annex C | National Guidelines for the Safe Prescribing of Opioids 2021 |
| Annex D | Notification of Suspected Drug Addicts via eNOTIF Only |

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