

ST THOMAS/ELGIN COUNTY FENTANYL PATCH 4 PATCH REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Fentanyl Patch 4 Patch Return Policy

This “Fentanyl Patch 4 Patch” Return Policy has been established in other communities across the Province for the purpose of public education and awareness regarding the risks of Fentanyl abuse and misuse. The policy is not meant to complicate the treatment of pain management but to guarantee the responsible provision of Fentanyl and to reduce any possible criminal diversion of Fentanyl. It is important to address the issue of Fentanyl patch disposal properly to avoid harm to members of the community.

1) **PHYSICIANS RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a) **Patient Education:** Accurate and thorough client/family education is essential in promoting safe use of Fentanyl patches. The physician will also caution the client/family to store the patches in a secure place, and to follow the procedure to keep track of the number of patches they have, to decrease the risk of accidental misuse by others.
- b) **Prescriptions:** Physicians are discouraged from writing large number of prescribed Fentanyl patches to be dispensed by the pharmacy. It is recommended that no more than “10 Fentanyl patches will be dispensed” at once. (One patch every 72 hours x10= 30days). The pharmacist will use their discretion as to the amount of quantities to be dispensed (i.e. one month supply vs. 3 month supply) Physicians will determine from their patients which pharmacy and location they utilize for their pharmaceutical needs. The physician must write on the prescription the actual pharmacy and location in which the prescription will be dispensed. Whenever possible, the prescription will be faxed to that specific pharmacy.
- c) **When a patient does not return patches:** The pharmacist will notify the physician immediately in writing. The physician is responsible for acknowledging the pharmacy as soon as possible in writing. When patches **are not** returned the pharmacist will dispense one patch during the prescribed dosing period (i.e. daily, 48 hrs, 72 hrs) until the pharmacist is able to contact the physician or vice versa. This will be referred to as the **CONTINGENT DISPENSING PROTOCOL**.

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2) PHARMACIST RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) **Patient Education:** Accurate and thorough client/family education is essential in promoting safe use of Fentanyl patches. The pharmacy will caution the client/family to store the patches in a secure place, and to follow the procedure to keep track of the number of patches they have, to decrease the risk of accidental misuse by others.
- b) **Counseling Client/Family on Fentanyl:**
Attach a provided “Fentanyl Return Blank Sheet” to the bagged Fentanyl prescription.
Explain to the Patient that they are required to tape the removed/used patch to the “Fentanyl Return Sheet”, sign below, place the time and the date below.
Explain to the client/family that they may not be able to receive more patches if the current patches are not returned to the pharmacy.
Educate on the importance of the Fentanyl return policy and the need for such a policy.
- b) Count the Fentanyl patches returned and inspect them for any damage or tampering.
- c) Report all suspicious use or abuse to the physician and communicate this to the client/family if applicable.
- d) At any point if the Pharmacist believes that a Criminal offence has occurred he/she **MAY** cause a report to be forwarded to the local Police agency.
- f) **When a patient does not return patches:** The pharmacist will notify the physician immediately in writing. The physician is responsible for acknowledging the pharmacy as soon as possible in writing.
When patches **are not** returned the pharmacist will dispense one patch during the prescribed dosing period (i.e. daily, 48 hrs, 72 hrs) until the pharmacist is able to contact the physician or vice versa. This will be referred to as the **CONTINGENT DISPENSING PROTOCOL**.

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3) PHARMACY TECHNICIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) When filling a Fentanyl prescription, place the comment “return to pharmacy, once used” at the end of the sig. (Quick code – “fent”)
- b) When counting a Fentanyl prescription, place a Fentanyl Return blank sheet with the filled prescription to be attached by the pharmacist.
- c) Any questions regarding the Fentanyl Return policy can be referred to the Pharmacist, if need be.
- d) Destroy the returned patches daily using gloves and scissors. Place in environmental disposal bins.

4) DEATHS

- a) Family members of the deceased are to return any unused/used Fentanyl patches and other prescription medication to a local pharmacy for proper disposal.
- b) Patients that expire at home under the care of Allied Home Care (such as CCAC), the Home Care staff are requested to call the dispensing pharmacy to discuss pickup of the Fentanyl patches and attached form for return to the pharmacy.
- c) Sudden Death cases where Police attend the scene medications will be secured and dealt with as per the policy of the local Police agency.

5) FOLLOW-UP

- a) Evaluation of the process will be done in three months and any issues can be forwarded to Constable Frank Boyes of the St. Thomas Police Drug Enforcement Unit or Jacky Allan Public Health Nurse at Elgin St. Thomas Public Health.