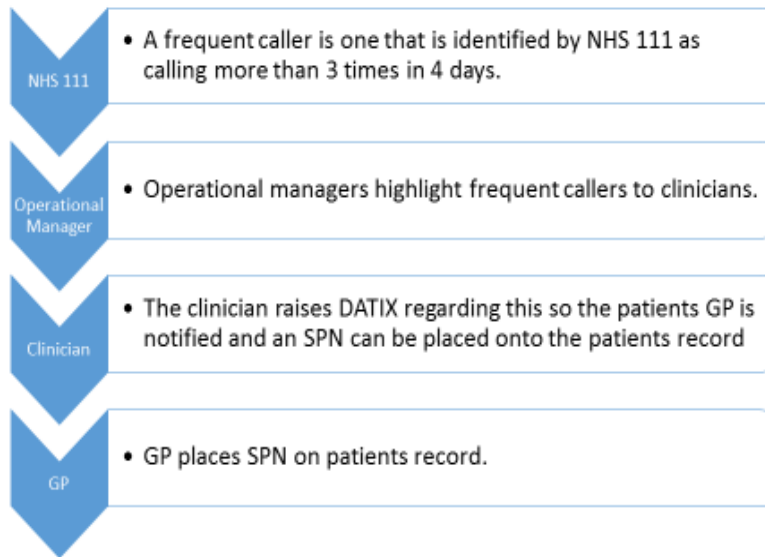


STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE DOCUMENT (SOP)

Title	Management of Drug Misuse including Methadone		Doc. No.	CL008
Scope	Clinical Directorate			
Purpose	<p>To ensure clear guidance when managing patients in an out-of-hours setting, requesting drugs of misuse. This includes but is not restricted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methadone • Buprenorphine • Benzodiazepines • Codeine • Gabapentinoids • Dihydrocodeine 			
Guidelines	<p>Primary Care 24 is not commissioned to provide drug misuse treatment and strongly advises clinicians not to provide emergency prescriptions for medications used in the management of drug misuse.</p>			
PROCEDURE			RESPONSIBILITY	
1	<p>Treatment for Drug Misusers</p> <p>Treatment of drug misusers is a specialist service rather than falling within the responsibility of general practitioners.</p> <p>Primary Care 24 is not commissioned to provide a prescription service for treating drug misusers. Responsibility for providing prescriptions for methadone, buprenorphine etc. lies with the doctor commissioned to prescribe. Primary Care 24 strongly advises not to provide emergency prescriptions in such cases.</p> <p>Clinicians hold a specialist qualification in this area and who are trained and experienced in the management of drug misuse may consider that it is appropriate to provide a prescription when corroboration of the drug, the strength and the dose is available, e.g. from the patient's regular dispensing pharmacist. It is not appropriate for others to do this and it remains entirely the responsibility of the prescribing clinician.</p> <p>Specifically, appointments should not be made at any Urgent Care Centres for such patients as the requirement to refuse a prescription can put the Urgent Care Centre clinician and receptionist at risk.</p> <p>If patients require further help and assistance, it is advised that the clinician informs the patient of the 24 hour addiction helpline. The free phone number is 0800 028 1300.</p>		Primary Care 24 Clinician	

	<p>Opiate withdrawal is rarely life threatening but opiate toxicity frequently is.</p> <p>If the patient wishes to continue to use illicit substances give advice, information and leaflets on overdose risk and harm reduction.</p> <p>Benzodiazepines should not be prescribed for management of drug or alcohol withdrawal. As a service we do not prescribe Librium (chlordiazepoxide) or any other drug for this purpose.</p> <p>If the patient is in a state of drug / alcohol withdrawal then they should be referred to the medical team.</p>	
2	<p>Prescribing Potential Drugs of Abuse</p> <p>All potential drugs of abuse should be prescribed with great care and caution.</p> <p>There may be specific clinical circumstances when a clinician may choose to prescribe potential drugs of abuse and these include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Palliative care 2. Acute back pain with muscle spasm 3. Stress / anxiety disorder <p>Outside of these indications they should not be prescribed.</p> <p>When prescribing potential drugs of abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only prescribe when there is access to the Summary care Record (SCR). • Ensure the “previous encounters” on AdastrA have been checked. • Prescribe the smallest reasonable quantity possible this will normally be 2 days or until the patients GP practice is next open. • Only prescribe for a clear licensed indication and where the need for the medicine is urgent and not prescribing may cause harm to the patient. • Consider the status of the drug locally (Pan Mersey Formulary) • Be aware that drug misusers may be very manipulative in their presentation and a request for drugs of potential abuse may be cloaked behind a seemingly unrelated problem. A rule of thumb should be; if the clinician volunteers the prescription for the clinical problem, the prescription is likely to be appropriate; if the patient suggests the prescription, there may be drug seeking behaviour. 	

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Frequent Callers

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE DOCUMENT (SOP)

Title		Management of Drug Misuse including Methadone		Doc. No.	CL008
Version			v9		
Supersedes			All previous versions		
Approving Managers/Committee			Operational Directorate		
Date Ratified			6 th May 2010 (original)		
Department of Originator			Service Manager		
Responsible Executive Director			Medical Director		
Responsible Manager/Support			Clinical Governance Manager / Medical Lead IUC / Service Manager		
Date Issued			May 2010 (original)		
Next Review Date			January 2022 (or when there is a change in procedure)		
Target Audience			Clinical Directorate		
Version	Date	Control Reason		Accountable Person for this Version	
v1 – V6	2010 – 2015	Review and update		Various	
v7	June 2017	Review and update and change of responsible director		Medical Lead	
v8	August 2019	Review and update and change of company name		Medical Lead IUC	
v9	January 2020	Reviewed and updated accordingly		Head of Medicines Management	
Reference documents		Electronic Locations		Locations for Hard Copies	
		Review and update and change of responsible director Care 24 Intranet		Standard Operating Procedures File in the Call Centre	
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