

## Prescribing Opioid Medication

Firdale Medical Centre

2024



Prescribing Opioid Medication

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### **Purpose and definitions**

This policy clarifies the good practice in relation to prescribing opioid medication at Firdale Medical Center. It uses current scientific data to establish safe processes of managing patients who may require such medication.

Many of our patients take strong, potentially addictive medication to help manage their condition(s). Of concern are ‘drugs of dependence’ (e.g., opioid medications and benzodiazepines), particularly when these are prescribed on an on-going basis.

Due to increasing reports of abuse of prescription drugs and patient behavioural problems, Firdale Medical Centre has established this policy to ensure adequate treatment of your condition, while reducing the risk of problems with prescription drugs.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all prescribing staff at Firdale Medical Centre, locum clinicians and patients who are registered with the practice.

### **Roles, rights, and responsibilities**

#### **All staff**

All staff have a responsibility to understand the concepts of this policy and to use this understanding to deliver an appropriately aligned service.

You have a responsibility to maintain your training and understanding in line with national and/or local standards.

You have a responsibility to understand your organisation’s policy and align to the standards contained within the policy.

You have a responsibility to understand how to report any issue relating to a person acting in a way that is contrary to the concepts of privacy and dignity within your organisation.

### **Practice manager**

To update the policy, ensure that it is aligned with national guidelines, distribute appropriately and ensure that staff are trained at induction and at regular intervals so that they are aware of the principles of the policy.

### **Principles of this policy**

If you are a new patient to the practice:

- It may take time to get accurate medical information about your condition. Until such information is available, your GP may choose not to prescribe any medication. It is our policy that GPs do not prescribe drugs of dependence until they have a full clinical picture.
- Your GP may decide not to continue prescribing an opioid medication previously prescribed for you. It may be determined that such medication is not suitable. It is our policy that GPs do not prescribe drugs of dependence if they feel that previous prescriptions were inappropriate.

Following current prescribing guidance, we will no longer be prescribing Tramadol.

- Your GP will evaluate your condition and only prescribe an opioid of the strength necessary for you. This may be different to the strength you had prescribed at your previous GP Practice.

General practice standards:

- If the decision to prescribe is taken after a shared discussion of goals, plans, risks, and benefits, you may be required to confirm your consent in writing.
- You will be asked to complete an opioid management plan treatment agreement that gives details of our practice's expectations when prescribing drugs of dependence. This agreement also describes your responsibilities as a patient when taking a drug of dependence; any prescriptions

issues; advice on taking your medications; how we will monitor your care; and the standards of behaviour that are expected.

- Patients may need to acknowledge that their care requirements are complex, and that referral for on-going support for all or part of your healthcare may be required. It is our practice policy that patient care is matched with the level of complexity.
- Patients are reminded that we have zero tolerance on issues relating to staff abuse.

New patients will be advised about this policy via letter upon their registration following review by our pharmacy team.

The letter is available on EMIS and also attached to this policy

### **Distribution**

Employees will be made aware of this policy via TeamNet.

New patients will be made aware of this policy using letter and via practice website.

Current patients will be reviewed and issued letter inviting to a consultation with one of practice GPs

### **Monitoring and reporting**

Monitoring and reporting in relation to this policy are the responsibility of the practice manager.

The following sources will be used to provide evidence of any issues raised:

- PALS.
- Complaints.
- Significant and learning events.

Any incidents relating to dignity and respect will be monitored via incident reporting.

**Appendices**



Tramadol Letter Current Patients.doc



Prescribing Opioid Medicine Policy New

**Versions**

Document review history

Version number	Author/reviewer	Summary of amendments	Issue date
1	Marek Matuszczak	Policy created	12/07/2024

**Bibliography**

Chronic pain (primary and secondary) in over 16s: assessment of all chronic pain and management of chronic primary pain NICE guideline [NG193] Published: 07 April 2021

[Overview](#) | [Chronic pain \(primary and secondary\) in over 16s: assessment of all chronic pain and management of chronic primary pain](#) | [Guidance](#) | [NICE](#)