

## Notice from the Executive Officer: Update Regarding Palliative Care Access to High-Strength Long-Acting Opioids under the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program

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November 30, 2016

As previously communicated in the Notice from the Executive Officer released July 20, 2016, the following products will be delisted from the ODB Formulary/Comparative Drug Index effective with the **January 2017 ODB Formulary update**:

- Higher strengths of long-acting opioids, including:
  - Morphine 200 mg tablets;
  - Hydromorphone 24 mg and 30 mg capsules;
  - Fentanyl 75 mcg/hr and 100 mcg/hr patches; and
- Meperidine 50 mg tablets.

For the list of affected drug names and DINs, please consult Table 1 below.

### Palliative Care

As a result of ongoing work with health care providers and key groups specializing in palliative care, led by the Ontario Palliative Care Network, effective with the **January 2017 ODB Formulary update**, continued access to high-strength long-acting opioids for patients requiring palliative care will be maintained through the ODB program's:

1. **Palliative Care Facilitated Access (PCFA) mechanism**, for physicians who are registered PCFA prescribers through the Ontario Medical Association; and
2. **Exceptional Access Program (EAP) Telephone Request Service (TRS)** for physicians who are not PCFA prescribers, when the following criterion is met:
  - A consultation with a PCFA-registered prescriber has been undertaken to support palliative care treatment using high-strength long-acting opioids.

Approval Duration: not to exceed 12 months.

Renewal: Will require a new call to TRS and a new consultation from a registered PCFA prescriber.

In both circumstances, the patient must have a progressive life-limiting illness and require the high-strength long-acting opioid medication for palliative purposes. This definition is aligned with guidance outlined in the Report entitled: "*Advancing High Quality, High Value Palliative Care in Ontario Declaration of Partnership and Commitment to Action (2011)*", available at: [http://health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/ltc/docs/palliative%20care\\_report.pdf](http://health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/ltc/docs/palliative%20care_report.pdf)

The Telephone Request Service is available between 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays) and can be reached by calling the Ontario Public Drug Programs toll-free at 1-866-811-9893. Select the TRS option when prompted.

The current PCFA eligibility criteria for physicians are in the process of revision. While the criteria are being updated, current prescribers registered under the PCFA program will continue to be able to prescribe PCFA drugs. New criteria for future enrollees will be released in the next couple of months.

In the future, there may be further revisions to funding policies under the ODB Program to reduce the risk of addiction and death resulting from the abuse, misuse, and diversion of high-strength long-acting opioids.

### How does this change affect pharmacists?

For the high-strength long-acting opioid medications that are on the Facilitated Access to Palliative Care list, product identification numbers (PINs) have been created. For a claim related to palliative care, pharmacists must enter the ministry-assigned PIN. For a claim related to an authorization through the EAP, the actual Drug Identification Number (DIN) of the product should be used in the claim. Please refer to Table 1 below for the new PINs and corresponding DINs for these products.

Table 1: New PINs and Corresponding DINs for Palliative Care Access to High-Strength Long-Acting Opioids

DRUG NAME	DIN	PIN	MANUFACTURER
MS Contin 200 mg SR Tab	02014327	09857571	Purdue Pharma
Novo-morphine SR 200 mg	02302802	09857572	Novopharm
M-Eslon 200 mg ER Cap	02177757	09857573	Ethypharm Inc.
Hydromorph Contin 24 mg	02125382	09857574	Purdue Pharma
Hydromorph Contin 30 mg	02125390	09857576	Purdue Pharma
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02314657	09857577	Apotex
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02386887	09857578	Cobalt
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02396734	09857579	Mylan
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02341409	09857580	Pharmascience
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02330148	09857581	Ranbaxy
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02327155	09857582	Sandoz
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02282976	09857584	Teva
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02314665	09857585	Apotex
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02386895	09857586	Cobalt
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02396742	09857587	Mylan
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02341417	09857588	Pharmascience
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02330156	09857589	Ranbaxy
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02327163	09857590	Sandoz
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02282984	09857592	Teva

In addition, pharmacists should:

- Inform affected patients regarding these changes as soon as possible and refer them to their primary care prescriber and/or specialist to discuss changes to their prescription(s).
- Continue to stock high-strength long-acting formulations of long-acting opioids in support of palliative care access to these products.
- Ensure each prescription for a high-strength long-acting opioid after January 2017 is accompanied by the required information for approval and dispensing. Pharmacists are reminded that supporting documentation must be kept on file at the pharmacy.

For example, to facilitate the reimbursement process at the pharmacy for a PCFA request, the prescriber will be asked to indicate either “Palliative” or “P.C.F.A.” on the prescription to signify that the patient meets the above-noted eligibility criteria. The physician’s CPSO registration number must be included on the prescription for purposes of verification.

**Who can I contact with questions?**

If you require further clarification or have questions regarding this matter, please send your question(s) to [PublicDrugPrgrms.moh@ontario.ca](mailto:PublicDrugPrgrms.moh@ontario.ca) or call:

Pharmacists - call the ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641

Other health care providers - call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY at 416-327-4282.