



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: USE OF METHADONE

Policy No.: B833
Supersedes: April 11, 2019
Revision Date: July 29, 2022
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PURPOSE:

To provide clear guidelines on the administration of methadone within Rancho.

POLICY:

In accordance with the State Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, the following guidelines are to be used in the administration of methadone to Rancho inpatients (see Pharmacy Policy and Procedure, 3.13.7, Methadone Guidelines).. These guidelines are in accordance with the United States Code of Federal Regulations 21 CFR 1306.17 (c) and Health and Safety Code, Section 11217.

A. Methadone for Pain Control

1. Methadone may be dispensed to inpatients for pain control.
2. All new orders for inpatient methadone shall be written on the "Methadone Inpatient Physician Order Form".
3. Outpatient prescriptions are allowed for pain control. The physician must contact the pharmacy for special prescription instructions. Methadone orders must be written on either a tamper-resistant prescription form or by using the Electronic Prescription Controlled Substances (EPCS) system.

B. Methadone for Narcotic Opiate Addiction

1. A patient on methadone for narcotic opiate addiction may be continued on methadone treatment during inpatient hospitalization if the following criteria have been validated:
 - a. The primary care physician has contacted the patient's methadone clinic for verification of treatment enrollment and maintenance dosage regimen.
 - b. Methadone dosage is consistent with the dosage prescribed by the bonafide treatment program.
2. Rancho physicians should not initiate treatment, increase or decrease* the dosage or detoxify the patient without consulting with the methadone treatment program medical staff.

* Exceptions include patient receiving: (a) concomitant patient-controlled analgesia (PCA) narcotics; or (b) narcotics for post-operative pain control.

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1997

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES • DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

APPROVED BY:

3. If the patient is NOT in a bonafide program, but was admitted to Rancho on methadone for opiate addiction from a transferring facility, the Rancho physician must attempt to detoxify the patient from methadone prior to discharge.
4. Methadone may be used for an inpatient with symptoms of acute heroin withdrawal if the patient has been admitted and is being treated at Rancho for a diagnosis other than addiction, e.g., rehabilitation. Methadone for acute heroin withdrawal is a limited treatment regimen. The patient must be tapered off methadone prior to discharge.

BJ:bc