

# Barrie Drug Safety Strategy

## ***Opioid Patch for Patch Return Procedure***

The Opioid Patch 4 Patch Return Procedure has been established in Barrie for the purpose of public education and awareness regarding Opioid abuse and misuse. This policy is not meant to complicate the treatment of pain management, but to guarantee the responsible provision of such a potentially deadly drug. It is important to address the issue of disposal of opioid patches properly to avoid harm to others.

### ***Physician's Responsibilities***

- 1) **Patient Education** – Accurate and thorough patient/family education is essential in promoting safe use of opioid patches. The physician will also caution the patient/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 theft or accidental misuse by others.
- 2) **Prescriptions** – Physicians are cautioned not to write large numbers of opioid patches for the pharmacist to dispense. It is recommended that no more than 30 days' supply will be dispensed" at once.

Physicians will determine from their patients which **pharmacy and location** they utilize for their medication management. The physician must write on the prescription the **actual pharmacy and location** in which the prescription will be dispensed. The prescription will be faxed to that pharmacy along with the Opioid Medication Treatment Agreement.

**Contingency Plan If All Patches Are Not Returned** – If the quantity differs from the expected amount to be returned, the pharmacy will only dispense 1-2 doses and will notify the physician immediately in writing (fax) or phone. The physician is responsible for acknowledging the pharmacy as soon as possible in writing or by phone to let pharmacy know whether they can dispense a month supply.

- 3) **Physician & Patient Agreement for Use & Termination of Opioid Patch Treatment** – Physicians prescribing Opioid patches will ensure that their patients understand that they cannot alter/tamper their patches in any way or sell their prescribed opioid patches to any other person(s) *without consequences*.

The patient will be required to sign their "Pharmacy Opioid Patch 4 Patch Return Disposal Sheet" that states that they acknowledge that they are aware that if any of their attached patches are found to be **counterfeit** that they could face Criminal Charges. The pharmacist or pharmacist technician will sign the disposal sheet that they have received with the used patches. If the pharmacy suspects that the patches are counterfeit or have been altered/tampered with, the family physician and local police authorities will be notified immediately.

### ***Pharmacy Responsibilities***

- 1) **Patient Education** – Accurate and thorough patient/family education is essential in promoting safe use of opioid patches. The pharmacy will caution the patient/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 theft or accidental misuse by others.

- 2) **Counseling Patients/Family on Fentanyl Patches** – Attach a provided “Used Opioid Patch Medication Disposal Sheet” to the bagged Opioid prescription.

*Review the Pharmacy Opioid Patch 4 Patch Return Disposal Guidelines with patient/family:*

- a) That this system is a program only to promote a safe, effective and responsible use of the opioid patch.
  - b) Store your opioid patch (new and used) in a safe and secure place in your home, keep out of the reach of all but especially children and pets.
  - c) Stick the used patch on the sheet in the numbered box, place the patch flat so that it is totally visible.
  - d) Tape only the four corners of the patch with a small amount of tape. You must return all of your patches to have your prescription refilled.
  - e) When your prescription is filled you must sign the ‘Pharmacy Opioid Patch 4 Patch Return Disposal Sheet’ (Guidelines for Returning) that states: ‘By signing this form, I am acknowledging that I am aware that if any of the attached opioid patches are found to be counterfeit, I could face Criminal Charges.’ Dated, Signed and Witnessed. This would apply to any agent who is dropping off and picking up Rx as well.
  - f) If the guidelines are not followed, you will not have your opioid prescription refilled until the proper procedure is followed and your Family Physician is notified.
  - g) When a patient does not return all patches, the pharmacist will only give the patient 1-2 doses and notify the physician immediately. At any point if the pharmacist believes that a Criminal offense has occurred, he/she shall notify the Police.
- ✓ Count the opioid patches returned, inspect them for any damage or tampering
  - ✓ Report all suspicious use or abuse to the physician
  - ✓ Advise the patient if they should be admitted to a hospital and they remove their opioid patch, to have the hospital staff document the date of removal and verify their admission on an admission document which is signed by the attending physician. This can then be presented to the pharmacy when you are required to have your opioid prescription refilled for verification.

### **Other**

- ✓ *Refer all patients unaware of the opioid return procedure to the pharmacist for proper counseling.*
- ✓ *Any questions regarding the opioid return procedure refer the patient to the physician and/or the pharmacist.*
- ✓ *Destroy the returned patches according to best practices and pharmacy protocols.*
- ✓ *Patients that die at home –Family members should be instructed to return all medication, including opioid patches and attached forms to a pharmacy as soon as possible after the patient dies.*
- ✓ *When police attend a sudden death scene in Barrie, the deceased person’s medications are seized and disposed of. Often the medications are taken to the dispensing pharmacy for destruction, other times they’re brought back to detachment to be destroyed at a later date with other controlled substances.*



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*Adapted with permission of the North Bay & Area Drug Strategy*