

Opioid Dependency Treatment

PMP-NL would like to highlight the increase in prescribers and dispensers providing Opioid Dependency Treatment (ODT) to patients in the province. At the start of 2019 there were 48 clinicians (physicians/nurse practitioners) prescribing ODT in the province and at the start of 2023 there are 75. That's a 56% increase in clinicians prescribing methadone and Suboxone in the province over that 3-year period. Over the same period, we had a 54% increase in the number of pharmacies dispensing ODT, increasing from 67 pharmacies at the start of 2019 to 103 at the start of 2023. While there is significant work ahead in addressing the opioid issues in the province, these are positive steps in the right direction in helping patients with opioid use disorder.

Monitored Drugs under PMP-NL

A reminder that currently the only monitored drugs under the PMP-NL are opioids. Other controlled substances such as benzodiazepines (lorazepam, diazepam, etc) and stimulants (methylphenidate, amphetamine, etc.) are not monitored by the program. While recommended, patient medication profile queries are not required when prescribing or dispensing these medications under the Prescription Monitoring Act. These drugs or others may be added to the monitored drug list in the future at the request of the Minister of Health and Community Services. An up-to-date list of currently monitored drugs can be found at [Monitored Drug List – Prescription Monitoring Program – NL \(pmpnl.ca\)](https://pmpnl.ca).

Prescription Written Date

The program would like to stress the importance to prescribers of writing the actual date a prescription is written on prescriptions and not postdating prescriptions with the date of intended dispensing. If you wish a prescription to not be dispensed until a specific date in the future, please write those instructions in the sig of the prescription. For pharmacies entering prescriptions onto a patient's profile please ensure the written date is accurately recorded. Dispensing software will default the written date to the date of prescription entry which isn't necessarily the date it was written.

When written dates are incorrectly recorded on prescription pads or at the pharmacy it affects PMP-NL's auditing of prescriber medication profile check compliance. The program audits to ensure a medication profile query was sent for a patient from the prescriber on the date the monitored drug was prescribed. If the prescriber has postdated the prescription or the pharmacy inaccurately recorded the written date, we may miss the profile query if it happened on a different date than what was submitted as the written date.