

Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Prescribing for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD): Buprenorphine/Naloxone, Methadone, Slow-release Oral Morphine

Site Applicability

VCH Community sites implementing RN/RPN (Nurse) prescribing to support the [Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Public Health Pharmacotherapy](#) Public Health Order (PHO) (dated 16 Sept 2020)

Practice Level

Regulated Profession	Advanced Competency (requiring additional education and training)
RN/RPN	Prescribing of buprenorphine/naloxone, methadone, slow-release oral morphine for opioid use disorder

Education Requirements

- Completion of the [BC Centre on Substance Use \(BCCSU\) Provincial Opioid Addiction Treatment Support Program \(POATSP\) – Oral Opioid Agonist Treatment Nurses \(RN or RPNs\)](#), and VCH training
- Meet all British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM) requirements for RN/RPNs prescribing under the PHO Order; RN/RPNs must follow the BCCNM Limits and Conditions for [RN](#) and [RPN](#) nurse prescribing

Requirements

- [RN/RPN](#) recognized by BCCNM as an Authorized Nurse Prescriber:
 - [RN/RPN](#) meets all of the criteria required for prescribing for opioid use disorder (OUD).
- VCH sponsors RN/RPN to train to become a nurse prescriber
 - Program representative liaises with Regional Addiction Program Lead to obtain Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Public Health Pharmacotherapy Medical Health Officer Approval for the site.
 - Site program manager and director approve BCCSU education and operational requirements for Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Public Health Pharmacotherapy implementation.
- RN/RPN public health pharmacotherapy prescribing only occurs to support the PHO. RN/RPN prescribers must follow the VCH [Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Public Health Pharmacotherapy Policy](#)

- Authorized RN/RPN prescribers work within a shared care model and follow the:
 - [RN/RPN Public Health Pharmacotherapy Policy](#); and
 - BCCSU decision support tools for RN/RPN prescribing
 - [BCCSU DST Buprenorphine/Naloxone](#)
 - [BCCSU DST Methadone and SROM](#)
- In order to prescribe Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT), RNs and RPNs are required to:
 - Have full PharmaNet access
 - Have employer support to prescribe controlled drugs and substances
 - Meet BCCNM prescribing standards, limits and conditions and employer policies, standards and guidelines
- Each site where RNs/RPNs prescribe for OUD will establish site-specific workflows for escalation of care. Refer to [site-specific practices](#) below.

Need to Know

In accordance with the [Provincial Health Officers Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Public Health Pharmacotherapy Order](#) (PHO), as of November 2021, RN/RPN prescribers are able to prescribe methadone, slow-release oral morphine (SROM) and sublingual buprenorphine/naloxone.

Guideline

VCH clinicians follow the provincial decision support tools when prescribing:

- [BCCSU DST Buprenorphine/Naloxone](#)
- [BCCSU DST Methadone and SROM](#)

Site-specific Practices

Site-specific Standard Operating Procedures will support individual workflows for escalation of care for both consultation and referral.

Related Documents

- [BC Provincial Health Officers Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Public Health Pharmacotherapy Order \(PHO\)](#)
- BCCNM [Prescribing Medications](#)
- [BCCNM Limits and Conditions for RPN Prescribing](#)
- [BCCSU Decision Support Tool For RN and RPN Prescribing of Methadone or Slow-release Oral Morphine for Continuations, Titrations, or Restarts](#)
- [BCCSU Decision Support Tool for RN and RPN Prescribing of Buprenorphine/Naloxone](#)
- [BCCSU Guideline for the Clinical Management of Opioid Use Disorder](#)
- [BCCSU Opioid Use Disorder Practice Update](#)
- [BCCNM RN and RPN Prescribing for opioid use disorder – consulting and referring](#)

Related Policies

- [VCH RN and RPN Public Health Pharmacotherapy Policy](#)

Guidelines/Procedures/Forms

- [VCH Nurse Independent Medications to Minimize Opioid Withdrawal Symptoms Guideline](#)
- [VCH Dispensing or Distributing Take Home Naloxone Kits to be used for Suspected Opioid Overdose \(Adults and Youth\) DST](#)
- [VCH Management of Suspected Opioid Overdose \(Adults and Youth\) \(for Nurses, NPs and VCPPrimary Care Physicians\) DST](#)

References

BCCSU decision support tools for RN/RPN prescribing:

- [BCCSU DST Buprenorphine/Naloxone](#)
- [BCCSU DST Methadone and SROM](#)

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Approved By: <i>(committee or position)</i>	VCH
	Endorsed By: Clinical Nurse Specialist, Regional Mental Health & Addiction Program Director, Coastal, SCPR- Program Admin Professional Practice Director, Nursing & Allied Health, Office of the CNO Final Sign Off: Vice President, Professional Practice & Chief Clinical Information Officer, VCH
Owners: <i>(optional)</i>	VCH
	Development Team Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Nurse Specialist - Regional Addiction Program • Nursing Practice Initiatives Lead – Vancouver Community