

November 2025

Dear Pharmacy Team

We hope Flu season is successful and your teams are keeping well. Each month we review all our incidents across the country and we look for themes and trends. One of the highest recurring categories is around dispensing errors and loss of prescriptions in pharmacies. There is a common theme in many areas that prescriptions are lost after receipt in the pharmacy, and we have also found that this is more likely if locum staff have worked at the pharmacy in the preceding weeks.

Please can we kindly request that as a team you review the process in your pharmacy for receipt of prescriptions from our service, and the SOPs associated.

Each team member should be made aware of the importance of ensuring, as soon as possible on receipt, that prescriptions are checked off, reviewed and stored according to this process. Further, please can there be a **clearly designated location where these prescriptions are stored, so as to limit the chance that any could be misplaced by staff unfamiliar with the store.** A set folder for example, or clearly labelled file box can be good ways to do this.

Some pharmacies detail their process and where FP10 MDA prescriptions are stored until complete as part of the locum welcome pack which can be useful.

It can also be good to have clarity on the expectation of process around VOIDS in the pharmacy and add a note on the PMR capturing who from our service has advised to VOID and when, plus who they spoke to in your team.

VOIDS may apply for one or all the prescriptions associated with a client and it is important that the action required is clarified and then carried out on the one or all related prescriptions as directed by the service. Please always use appropriate checks to ensure you have the correct client's prescriptions.

If you do get advised by a hospital a client has been admitted to hospital please let our service know as, on occasion, the hospital can forget to inform us.

For clarity the missed dose guidance is below and again this may be useful to use for locums as well as revisiting with all the team

Thank you as ever for your support and if there are any queries arising following this please don't hesitate to reach out to your local service.

What Good Supervision Looks Like Videos:

Buprenorphine

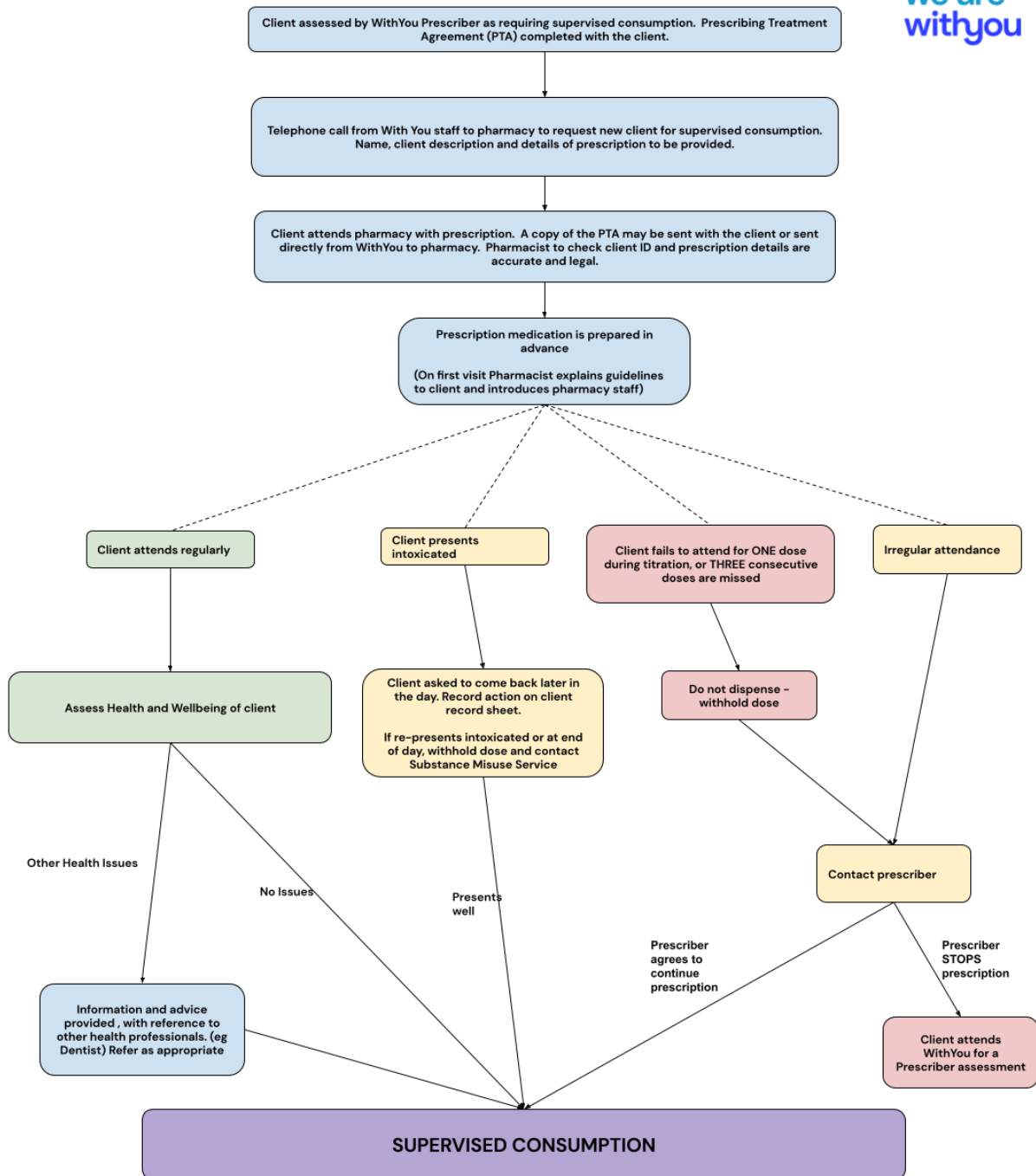
vimeo.com/394945822/48884bbbbd

Methadone

vimeo.com/394945912/ef5defb2d7

Espranor

vimeo.com/394945927/12377be762



Scenario	Action	Reasoning
Client misses <u>one</u> dose during titration phase (commencing of prescribing following a break).	Refer to prescriber in service before continuing to dispense. Add an entry on PMR.	During the titration phase clients are more at risk of overdose due to pharmacokinetics of methadone . It can take a few days until it stabilises at each dose and risk of respiratory suppression and sedation are highest at this time which could lead to overdose and death. There is some risk with buprenorphine but it reaches a steady state much quicker.
Client on a regular dose, missed 3 doses consecutively	Do not dispense and contact the prescriber/key worker in service for advice immediately after the third day. Prescription to be voided if prescriber advises. Cross through subsequent days on the back of the prescription at time instructed. Check if any other prescriptions have been sent in advance for the client and physically void these as well and document on PMR.	After 3 days the tolerance for methadone and buprenorphine is lost and risk of overdose may be present. Prescriber to decide next steps. We may ask the future prescriptions in your possession at the same time for the individual are also voided to avoid risk of them being dispensed by a locum for example. Ask if unsure. Recording on the PMR provides an audit trail if there is a query about the prescription in the future.
Client misses regularly 1 or 2 days supply	Dispense on presentation but advise service recovery workers if seeing a regular occurrence.	Recovery worker and prescriber can investigate any barriers to engagement and work with the client to remedy
Once on a regular dose client misses one dose	Note as a missed dose on the reporting system. Dispense as usual.	