

Queensland Opioid Treatment Program (QOTP)

Prescriber Types – October 2024

Level 1 - Full QOTP prescriber

This prescriber can prescribe the full suite of pharmacotherapy options (long-acting injection buprenorphine, buprenorphine-naloxone, buprenorphine-mono and methadone) for the treatment of opioid dependence following successful completion of the QOTP prescriber training and approval being given by Queensland Health.

Training Pathway

Successful and sequential completion of a series of brief e-learning packages provided by Insight: Centre for Alcohol and Other Drug Training and Workforce Development, followed by an individualised clinical placement in consultation with an approved and practising Level 1 Full QOTP prescriber.

Level 2 – Specified QOTP prescribers

Interim supervised QOTP prescriber

This prescriber (a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner) can prescribe the full suite of pharmacotherapy options (long-acting injection buprenorphine, buprenorphine-naloxone, buprenorphine-mono and methadone) for the treatment of opioid dependence for an interim period of up to 2 years while under the supervision of an experienced Level 1 Full QOTP prescriber, following approval being given by Queensland Health.

Training Pathway

Successful completion of the Full QOTP prescriber training requirements (see above) during the interim approval period (maximum 2 years), after which the prescriber must apply to have their prescriber type amended to Level 1 Full QOTP prescriber.

Buprenorphine-naloxone and long-acting injection buprenorphine QOTP prescriber

This prescriber can prescribe sublingual buprenorphine-naloxone and long-acting injection buprenorphine only for the treatment of opioid dependence following approval being given by Queensland Health.

Training Pathway

Successful and sequential completion of two brief e-learning packages provided by Insight: Centre for Alcohol and Other Drug Training and Workforce Development.

Shared Care QOTP prescriber

This prescriber (a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner) can prescribe a suite of pharmacotherapy options for the treatment of opioid dependence, with approval of shared care arrangements (on a case-by-case basis) by Queensland Health. Shared care arrangements are between a HHS-AOD service or a private Level 1 Full QOTP prescriber and an approved Shared Care QOTP Prescriber willing to co-manage a patient who has stable opioid dependence treatment. The HHS-AOD service or private Level 1 Full QOTP prescriber is responsible for co-ordinating the arrangement.

A proposed Shared Care medical practitioner or nurse practitioner must apply for Shared Care QOTP prescriber approval to Queensland Health. When approved, ongoing QOTP treatment is managed by the Shared Care QOTP prescriber. The patient remains registered with the HHS-AOD service or private Level 1 Full QOTP prescriber who will resume management if the patient de-stabilises.

Training Pathway

No mandatory training is required; however self-directed learning is highly recommended.

Level 3 – Temporary Alternative Prescriber (updated)

When an approved QOTP prescriber takes a temporary leave of absence from a clinic/practice or a patient is admitted to hospital, another prescriber (medical practitioner or nurse practitioner) who has not yet completed training can manage their patients during the leave of absence or while the patient is in hospital.

For backfill, the proposed temporary alternative prescriber (level 3) can apply for approval to cover the specified period of leave of absence from the practice. This approval enables continuation of prescribing (no changes to dose or take away arrangements).

In hospitals, medical practitioners or nurse practitioners may preemptively apply for Level 3 approval to treat inpatients. For inpatients the dose may be adjusted where required, due to the patient's general condition or other medicines administered in hospital. The prescriber should discuss dose adjustments with the patient's usual QOTP prescriber or if unavailable, another QOTP prescriber.

Training Pathway

No mandatory training is required; however self-directed learning is highly recommended.

Note regarding the role of Interns

Prescribers includes medical practitioners with provisional registration under the supervision and training requirements for their provisional registration (i.e., interns).

An intern can become a level 1 or level 2 prescriber through the pathways identified above.

Contacts:

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