

NEW SOUTH WALES OPIOID TREATMENT PROGRAM OVERSEAS TRAVEL GUIDE

General advice regarding arrangements for travel is provided in section 7.27 of the *NSW Opioid Treatment Program: clinical guidelines for methadone and buprenorphine treatment of opioid dependence*. Further advice should be sought from the following Australian Government websites regarding travelling with any prescribed medication overseas:

- TGA at <http://www.tga.gov.au/consumers/travellers-leaving.htm>
- Smartraveller at <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/tips/health.html>

For the Opioid Treatment Program the approved prescriber is also advised to:

- Make arrangements well in advance of travel.
- Clarify with the relevant embassies or consulates of the destination, that there are no impediments to possession of methadone or buprenorphine.
- Provide the patient with a letter stating that the person is in possession of the drug to treat a medical condition in accordance with Australian laws.
- Notify Pharmaceutical Services in writing of any such arrangements.
- Notify the current dosing point of the travel arrangements and ensure that they are aware of the expected departure and arrival date.
- Consider prescribing methadone tablets (Physeptone®) instead of methadone syrup, and buprenorphine/naloxone film (Suboxone®) instead of buprenorphine tablets or film (Subutex®), for the period of travel.
- Ensure the medication is in its original packaging with the dispensing label affixed and is carried in the hand luggage and declared at customs.

Methadone tablets should **not** be prescribed as a Pharmaceutical Benefit subsidised by Medicare Australia and the patient will be required to pay the full cost of the medication. For extended overseas stay (generally ≥ 30 days), prescribers should arrange for local dosing services at the destination.

For information regarding Opioid Treatment Programs in overseas countries, refer to webpage www.indro-online.de/nia.htm or contact the respective embassies in Australia <http://www.dfat.gov.au/embassies.html>

For further information or clarification of these guidelines, contact a Senior Pharmaceutical Officer, Pharmaceutical Services during office hours on (02) 9424 5921.

This guide has been produced by:

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