

28 February 2023

Opioid Substitution Therapy Programme

The following information is required in relation to the OST programme:

1) how does a person be assessed in the community?

The patient is assessed by both nursing or key working staff and medical staff. This includes a full medical, mental health and social assessment and usually happens over 2 appointments. Urine drug screens (UDS) are taken and both the case and results of the UDS are then discussed at a multidisciplinary meeting and a decision made regarding appropriate treatment. The patient is given written information regarding all the opioid substitution medications we use and we consider their preference of treatment when reaching a decision. The Substitute Prescribing Team can be accessed via the Trusts Drug Outreach Team or through a referral from the Community Addiction Team.

2) how long between assessment and treatment?

It takes 2-3 weeks from initial assessment to first prescription. Week 1 is nursing assessment, week 2 nursing and medical joint assessment. However we consider advice given/psychoeducation as treatment/ intervention; for example safe use of naloxone etc. This can occur during each contact.

3) is there a prioritisation system or is it done based on referral/ date of presentation?

Individuals are seen based on date of referral. Pregnant ladies and individuals with a HIV diagnosis will be prioritised.

4) roughly how long the waiting list is from date of referral/assessment before a decision is made and/or someone is being placed on OST.

The current waiting time for OST is 6 – 7 weeks.