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Medical Advisory

MA-2024-02

BHP Consultation for Consideration of Buprenorphine/Naloxone

For: Paramedics certified by the RPPEO

From: Dr. Michael Austin, RPPEO Medical Director (Interim)

Issue date: March 7, 2024

Effective date: March 7, 2024, until rescinded

Key message

Paramedics authorized to administer buprenorphine/naloxone are required to consult with a Base Hospital Physician through the Online Medical Consultation service before proceeding with medication administration.

Background

The Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards v5.3 enable paramedics who are trained and authorized in the use of buprenorphine/naloxone to consider administration in patients who require treatment for the relief of opioid withdrawal symptoms.

At RPPEO, we prioritize patient safety while integrating new treatments into out-of-hospital care. We are collaborating with paramedic services to integrate buprenorphine/naloxone into care pathways for people with substance use disorder. As we all work to implement this new model of care into paramedic practice, we aim for a coordinated, collaborative, and supportive approach for everyone involved.

Buprenorphine/naloxone is a controlled substance with important considerations for patient safety due to its interactions with opioid receptors and other metabolic pathways. As with any medication, there are risks associated with its use. To reinforce the safety and well-being of patients in this vulnerable target population, Dr. Michael Austin, RPPEO Medical Director, requests that paramedics consult with the Online Medical Consultation team, taking the opportunity to discuss risks and plans for your patients prior to buprenorphine/naloxone administration.