



Fact Sheet: Nurse Practitioners (NPs) Prescribing Methadone

The New Classes of Practitioners Regulations under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act authorizes NPs to prescribe: narcotics, controlled drugs, benzodiazepines, other targeted substances and testosterone. The prescribing authority for NPs in New Brunswick can be found in the Schedules for Ordering for Nurse Practitioners - in Appendix 2 of the document *Standards for the Practice of Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners*.

Prescribing Methadone

To prescribe methadone, NPs are subject to the Government of Canada's Narcotic Control Regulations subsection 53(3), which requires practitioners to obtain a subsection 56(1) exemption under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA). Subsection 56(1) of the CDSA allows the Federal Minister of Health to issue exemptions if, in the opinion of this Minister, the exemptions are necessary for a medical or scientific purpose or is otherwise in the public interest. Health Canada will issue exemptions to NPs to prescribe methadone upon recommendation from the Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB).

- A. To prescribe **methadone for analgesia**, the NANB strongly recommends NPs to complete one of the following learning options:
- the *Methadone for Pain in Palliative Care* course (www.methadone4pain.ca)
 - Douleur chronique et opioïdes : L'essentiel – Lignes directrices du Collège des médecins du Québec <http://www.cmq.org/publications-pdf/p-1-2009-05-01-fr-douleur-chronique-et-opioides.pdf>

In addition to completing education, NPs are required to do at least 8 hours of clinical practicum with a duly qualified practitioner who has a 'subsection 56(1) exemption under the CDSA' and is actively prescribing methadone for pain.

Once education and the clinical practicum are completed, NPs may submit a completed *Methadone for Analgesia Application* form, to the Registrar at NANB at registrar@nanb.nb.ca. NPs will receive an email confirming a Health Canada methadone prescribing exemption for analgesia.

- B. To prescribe **methadone for opioid dependence**, the NANB requires NPs to complete one of the following learning options:
- Opioid Dependence Treatment (ODT) Core Course
[http://www.camh.ca/en/education/about/AZCourses/Pages/Opioid-Dependence-Treatment-\(ODT\)-Core-Course-General-Information.aspx](http://www.camh.ca/en/education/about/AZCourses/Pages/Opioid-Dependence-Treatment-(ODT)-Core-Course-General-Information.aspx)
 - INSPQ: Traitement des troubles de l'usage d'opioïdes : une approche de collaboration interdisciplinaire
<https://www.inspq.qc.ca/formation/institut/its/traitement-des-troubles-lies-a-l-usage-d-opioides>

In addition to completing education, NPs are required to do at least 8 hours of clinical practicum with a duly qualified practitioner who has a 'subsection 56(1) exemption under the CDSA' and is actively prescribing methadone for opioid dependence.

Once education and clinical practicum are completed, NPs may submit a completed [Methadone for Opioid Dependence Application](#) form , to the Registrar at NANB at registrar@nanb.nb.ca .

NPs will receive an email confirming a Health Canada methadone prescribing exemption for opioid dependence.

The following documents are evidence informed guidelines for NPs prescribing methadone:

- Methadone Maintenance Treatment Handbook: College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia <https://cpsns.ns.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Methadone-Maintenance-Treatment-Handbook.pdf>
- Methadone Practice Directive: New Brunswick College of Pharmacists
<https://nbcph.in1touch.org/document/2038/Methadone%20Practice%20Directive%20Revised%200March%202015%20EN.pdf>
Directive professionnelle sur la méthadone : Ordre des pharmaciens du Nouveau-Brunswick
<https://nbcph.in1touch.org/document/1396/Methadone%20Practice%20Directive%20Revised%200March%202015%20FR.pdf>
- The 2017 Canadian Guideline for Opioids for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain
http://nationalpaincentre.mcmaster.ca/documents/Opioid%20GL%20for%20CMAJ_01may2017.pdf
Lignes directrices canadiennes relatives à l'utilisation des opioïdes pour le traitement de la douleur chronique non cancéreuse, édition 2017
<http://nationalpaincentre.mcmaster.ca/documents/PDFofnewFrenchguideline28sept2017.pdf>
- Utilisation de la méthadone dans le traitement de la toxicomanie aux opiacés : Collège des médecins du Québec <http://www.cmq.org/publications-pdf/p-1-1999-10-01-fr-utilisation-methadone-traitement-toxicomanie-aux-opiacés.pdf>
- Douleur chronique et opioïdes : L'essentiel – Lignes directrices du Collège des médecins du Québec <http://www.cmq.org/publications-pdf/p-1-2009-05-01-fr-douleur-chronique-et-opioïdes.pdf>