

Collaborating Nationally to Support Clinicians Locally:

Codeine Rescheduling

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In 2017, Australian clinicians were preparing for the impending Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) rescheduling of codeine. To help support clinicians in the management of patients impacted by the rescheduling, HNE HealthPathways collaborated with Streamliners, the HealthPathways regional clinical advisor, local pain and drug and alcohol services, the HNECCPHN Drug and Alcohol Project Officer and other HealthPathway communities to develop a chronic opioid use and deprescribing clinical pathway. Our team were also invited to join the TGA's Nationally Co-ordinated Codeine Implementation Working Group (NCCIWG) where we presented and shared our pathway and development process with a diverse group of policy makers and clinicians.

Following the development of these pages, we collaborated with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, the HNECCPHN and local specialists to develop and deliver 7 GP and allied health education events in 5 locations across the LHD to both educate clinicians and raise awareness of the pathway and referral options.

Benefits of collaboration:

- Provide GPs with assessment, management and referral advice that was evidence based, clinically appropriate, comprehensive and locally relevant.
- Empower GPs to manage a possible influx of patients with opioid dependence who had previously avoided presenting having obtained codeine over-the-counter at community pharmacies
- Minimise duplication of work across the HealthPathways community
- Assist allied health clinicians to support GPs and patients with their treatment plans
- Increase clinician knowledge of local referral options



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Chronic Opioid Use and Deprescribing

Indicates specific advice about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indicates information specific to people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

This pathway covers chronic **opioid** use and deprescribing of prescription and over-the counter (OTC) opioids.
See also: [Chronic Non-cancer Pain](#)

Clinical Editor's Note
From 1 February 2018 all codeine containing products will only be available on prescription. See the [TGA Codeine Information Hub](#) for more information.

[About chronic opioid use and deprescribing](#)

Evaluation of HNE HealthPathways and google analytics data over 6 years has shown increasing uptake and high usage by GPs with an average of 2800 users and 60,000 page views per month. We have also shown peaks in relevant pathway use in response to various health events, for example availability of new hepatitis C medications and outbreak of Zika Virus. The HNE Opioid Dependence and Deprescribing HealthPathway went live in November 2017. Google analytic data has shown approximately 26 page views per day with peaks when it first went live and at the beginning of February when the rescheduling changes came into effect.

Evaluation of the education events has been extremely positive, particularly with respect to the availability and quality of information presented on HealthPathways.

The success of the collaboration was a direct result of:

- having a clear purpose and timeframe
- collaborating with appropriate and relevant organisations
- liaising with engaged, enthusiastic and efficient clinicians
- a high level of GP engagement with HNE HealthPathways

