



Coalition of Pharmacists
Caring for Aging Canadians

CPCAC

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Abstract Poster Presentation

Title: Deprescribing Fentanyl (DEFY): A pilot quality improvement initiative across long term care facilities in Ontario

Objective: To evaluate the appropriateness of fentanyl patch use for individual residents in Long Term Care (LTC) homes across Ontario and to deprescribe fentanyl patch therapy where appropriate in order to potentially improve resident safety and reduce nursing workload associated with patch administration. The project aim was to reduce the number of fentanyl patches in use by 20% without compromising pain control over a six month period.

Methods: Clinical Consultant Pharmacists (CCPs) identified 161 residents with chronic non- cancer pain using fentanyl patch therapy from 61 LTC homes across Ontario using convenience sampling. Opioid tapering plans were created in consultation with the prescriber and nursing staff where appropriate, in alignment with the Canadian Guideline for Opioids for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain. Changes in pain control, pharmacologic therapy and overall clinical health status were documented at baseline and at approximate three month intervals post intervention.

Results: The average age of the residents under review was 82.4 years with 77% being female. CCPs made recommendations for 99 out of 161 residents to deprescribe fentanyl and the primary outcome measure of complete discontinuation was achieved in 33 residents (20%) and eight additional residents had their dose reduced (5%). A sub analysis of residents with documented pain scores showed 12 residents with improved pain control and three with documented worsening in pain while the majority had no change. The average number of patches used per resident was reduced in 39 residents, increased for three residents and remained unchanged for 119 residents, indicating a reduction in the overall use of fentanyl patches as well as a reduction in the use of multiple patches in combination. **Conclusions:** This pilot initiative demonstrated that a pharmacist-led collaborative approach to review and deprescribe fentanyl patches can achieve a clinically significant reduction in fentanyl patch use without compromising pain control and has the potential to improve patient safety and reduce nursing work load associated with patch administration. This project is currently being spread to other LTC homes in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

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