



SARAH LORD, PAMS SERVICE

*A PROGRAM OF HARM REDUCTION
VICTORIA*

Pharmacotherapy in Victoria – a consumer perspective



Pharmacotherapy in Victoria – a consumer perspective

This Presentation will cover:

- Pharmacotherapy in Victoria
- Treatment Options
- PAMS service
- PAMS Data
- Case study
- Systemic Advocacy
- Consumer and Provider Issues
- Current challenges and potential solutions
- Questions

Accessing MATOD in Victoria

Community Model of Service Delivery

Policy – guidelines

- Updated – COVID19 and LAIB
- Regulated

Opioid Dependent Consumer

- Illicitly Sourced
- Prescribed

Prescriber:

- GP/NP
- AMS

Dosing Point:

- Community Pharmacy
- Hospital



Treatment Options

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Methadone

- Methadone syrup
- Biodone Forte liquid

Buprenorphine- Naloxone Combination

- Suboxone sublingual film

Buprenorphine (mono)

- Subutex sublingual tablets

Long-Acting Injectable Buprenorphine

- Sublocade depot
- Buvidal depot





PAMS

PAMS SERVICE

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Pharmacotherapy
Advocacy
Mediation &
Support

Goals :

- 1) *Preserving Program Continuity*
- 2) *Increasing Access to Treatment*

The PAMS Service

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Consumer Driven

- Grass Roots Conception
- VIVAIDS Research

Multiple Issues

- Pharmacotherapy-related
- Identify Primary Concern

Advocacy & Mediation

- Negotiate the win-win

Case Management

- Short-term
- Solution Focused

Support & Follow-Up

- All Parties
- Calls, SMS, Email



The PAMS Staff

Program Manager

PAMS Service Officers
(3)

- Part-time 3-4 days

Consumer Experience

- Perspective
- Experience
- Trust

Pharmacotherapy/S8
Opioids

- Current
- Past



PAMS Data 2021-2022

Age

- Average = 42 Years
- Minimum=19 Years Maximum=76 Years

Gender

- Male=63.8%, Female=35%, Transgender=0.2%

Employment Status

- Unemployed=82.6%, Employed=16%

Homelessness

- Homeless=5.6%
- At Risk=3.8%



PAMS Data



Methadone

• 55.9%

Buprenorphine-
Naloxone

• 33%

Buprenorphine

• 1.5%

LAIB

• Buvidal 0.6% (w), 4% (m)
• Sublocade 3.2%



PAMS Data (2021-2022)

Primary Issue

Payment/Debt Management (21%)

Trouble Sourcing – Both GP and Pharmacy (12.3%)

GP Retired/Moved on (11%)

Primary Outcome

Changed GP (23.3%)

Financial Assistance (17.5%)

Changed both GP and Pharmacy (10.5%)

Avg. 77.4 cases per month

82.7% of PAMS Clients 'On Program' At Last Follow-Up

Impact on Treatment Retention & Access:

- 70% Retained
- 21% Re-started
- 4% Started

Systemic Advocacy

National

- AIVL
- Harm Reduction Australia

State

- Expert Advisory Group
- Committees

Local

- PABNs
- RACGP
- Pharmaceutical Society (Vic Branch)

Other

- Conference Presentation
- Agency
- Research





Case study

Julian

Demographics

- Male, 48YO, Unemployed, Recently Settled Regional Victoria, Carer - elderly parent

Referred by Hospital

- Presented to ED – opioid withdrawal
- 60mg Oxycontin daily, diazepam 15mg, Pregabalin 300mg, chronic pain,
- Inter-state Prescriber

Requests Methadone

- IDU History – 15 years ago
- Using more than prescribed
- Previous exp. BnX, unsuccessful

Issues

- One local prescriber at capacity
- Reluctance to initiate methadone
- Transport issues



Julian

Issues

- Access to AMS difficult
- PMS Inter-state
- Urgency to Initiate MATOD
- Withdrawal, anxiety, depression
- Hospital reluctant to initiate

Progress

- GP Referral & Health Summary
- AMS Appointment – Video Consult
- Dosing Point Arranged

Follow-Up

- Consumer struggling – agrees to start BnX
- AMS Assessment and Initiation – BnX only
- Referral to Local Prescriber

Final Outcome

- On Program with Local Prescriber
- Consumer on BnX
- Transfer to Methadone Negotiated



Consumer Issues

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Cost

Choice of:

- Treatment Type
- Service Providers

Availability

- Rural/Regional Vs Metro
- Timely access to appointments

Freedom

- Travel
- Employment

Stigma and Discrimination



Provider Issues

Access to Training

Difficult Patients

Lack of Support

- Collegial
- System

Aging Workforce

Referrals

Access to Specialists

Stigma and Discrimination



Improving Victoria's System ...

Multi Pronged Approach

Access to 'one-stop shop' – Complex Consumer

Access to Timely AMS Consult

Smart Card for Dosing

National System

Cost – PBS

Equitable Access to ALL Treatment Types

Mental Health/Pain Management/Drug Dependence

A specific MBS item number for prescribers



- “Thank you very much, the doctor you sent me to is real good, thanks, you people are diamonds” (Craig, Hoppers Crossing, March 2019)
- “I just wanted to say that you have made a big difference to me, things could have gone bad today and you turned it around for me, you’ve made a huge difference” (Naomi, Craigieburn, July 2019)
- “I can’t tell you how much of a weight you have taken off my shoulders. I really thought I would not have a pharmacy, but you got me one and I can start dosing again tomorrow, thanks a million” (Roland, Wantirna, March 2018).



- “I just wanted to thank you for the help you gave me yesterday, I just could not have done that on my own, I have the medication now, you are amazing, just thanks, sorry I'm really teary” (Lara, St Kilda, June 2021).



- “Thank you so much for listening to me and for the financial help you managed to organise for me, i didn’t expect it, you guys really work hard to help people” (Melissa, Ballarat, May 2022)



Thank-You

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Any
Questions?

