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Indicator: Chronic Opioid Use

Data Source	Definition	Numerator	Denominator	Comments	Covariates
PBS	Proportion of home care recipients who are chronic opioid users.	Number of home care recipients who are chronic opioid users (Table 1). Chronic opioid use is defined as receiving any number of opioid medications for at least 90 days continuously[1], or for 120 non-consecutive days[2] (1). The number of days of medication use is determined based on the number of units dispensed and estimated dose per day. No gap days between one opioid medication dispensing and another were allowed when determining consecutive use of opioids.	Number of home care recipients. Exclude pharmacological cancer treatment (Table 2).	N/A.	Age, sex, number of health conditions (excluding pain).

[1]Continuous opioid use for 90 days, which may begin before the reporting period start date, provided that day 90 occurs within the reporting period.
[2]120 days non-continuous refers to either: 1) total days of opioid use during the reporting period is >120 days OR 2) total days of opioid use in the reporting period (including opioid use in the 180-day period prior to the reporting period start date) is ≥120 days, with at least one day of opioid use during the reporting period.
PBS: Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. **N/A:** Not Applicable.

Table 1. Opioids Medications, Descriptions, ATC Codes, PBS Codes and Estimated Usual Dose.

Description	ATC	PBS items	Usual dose per day[1]
Morphine	N02AA01	08491X, 08492Y, 08493B, 12487F	1
		01653B, 01654C, 01655D, 01656E, 02839K, 02840L, 02841M, 05392T, 05393W, 05394X, 05395Y, 05396B, 08035X, 08349K, 08453X, 08454Y, 08489T, 08494C, 08669G, 08670H, 04349X, 05161P, 05162Q, 05164T, 05165W, 05391R, 12055L, 12009C	2
		08146R, 08305D, 08306E, 08490W	2 sachets
		01646P	4
		02122Q[2], 02123R[2], 02124T[2], 09014K, 09015L, 09016M, 09017N, 05238Q[2]	30 mg
Hydromorphone	N02AA03	09299K, 09406C, 09407D, 09408E, 09409F, 03357Q	1

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		08421F, 08420E	12 mg
		05132D[3], 08424J, 11467M, 12582F[2]	12 mL
		08541M,08542N, 08543P, 12047C, 12046B, 05115F, 05116G	6
Oxycodone	N02AA05	08385H, 08386J, 08387K, 08388L, 09399Q, 09400R, 05227D, 05247E, 05248F, 05249G, 05250H, 08681X, 12527H	2
		05191F, 05194J, 05195K, 08464L, 08501K, 08502L, 02481N, 02622B, 05191F, 05197M, 05198N[3], 12031F, 12023T, 12048D,12314D, 12044X, 13233L, 12074L, 12311Y	4
		08644Y[2], 05190E	20 mL
Oxycodone + Naloxone	N02AA55	08000C, 08934F, 08935G, 08936H, 10757E, 10758F, 10776E, 11102H, 11111T	2
Fentanyl[4]	N02AB03	05265D, 05277R, 05278T, 05279W, 05280X, 05437E, 05438F, 05439G, 05440H, 05441J, 08878G, 08891Y, 08892B, 08893C, 08894D, 08337T, 08338W, 08339X, 08340Y	1 patch per 3 days
Dextropropoxyphene	N02AC04	04081T	6
Methadone injection	N02AC52	01606M	3 mL injection
Methadone liquid	N02AC52	05399E[2], 05400F[2]	6 mL
		01609Q	3
Buprenorphine	N02AE01	08865N, 08866P, 08866P, 08867Q, 10746N, 10755C, 10756D, 10770W, 10948F, 10949G, 10953L, 10957Q, 10959T, 10964C, 10970J	1 patch per 7 days
Codeine, combinations with paracetamol	N02AJ06	01215Y, 03316M, 04170L, 04171M, 04275B, 08785J, 10186D, 12022R, 12066C	8
Codeine + Aspirin	N02AA59/ N02AJ07	01222H, 04286N	8
Tramadol	N02AX02	02527B, 08523N, 08524P, 08525Q, 03338Q, 05234L, 05235M, 05236N	2
		05001F, 09199E, 09200F, 09201G	1
		05232J, 08455B, 08611F, 12008B, 12024W	4
		08582Q, 05231H	4 mL injection
		08843K, 05150C	4 mL
Tapentadol	N02AX06	10091D, 10092E, 10094G, 10096J, 10100N	2
Codeine	N02AA	05063L, 01214X, 12065B, 12054K	4

[1]Quantity per day in tablets or capsules unless otherwise stated.

[2]Pharmacists were allowed to dispense volumes smaller than a whole bottle at PBS-subsidised prices (from 1 Aug 2022: PBS item 12582F; from 1 Feb 2023: PBS items 02122Q, 02123R, 02124T, 08644Y; from 1 Jul 2023: PBS items 05399E, 05400F).

[3]Removed from the PBS in 2011.

[4]Fentanyl lozenges (PBS items 10684H, 10697B, 10698C, 10729Q, 10737D) were excluded as clinical indication on the PBS is for cancer treatment and palliative care only.

PBS: Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. **ATC:** Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical.

Table 2. Pharmacological Cancer Treatment, Descriptions and ATC Codes.

Description	Code
Antineoplastic and immunomodulating agents[1]	L01*

[1]Determined using 6 months of PBS data prior to home care episode (Rx-Risk-V).
ATC: Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical Classification System.

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Any enquires about, or comments on, this Technical Specification document should be directed to:
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References

1. Von Korff M, Saunders K, Thomas Ray G, Boudreau D, Campbell C, Merrill J, et al. De facto long-term opioid therapy for noncancer pain. Clin J Pain. 2008;24(6):521-7.