



Prescribing and Accessing Clozapine for Patients Admitted to the Bunbury Hospital Outside of Pharmacy Hours Procedure

Effective: 27 September 2017

1. Guiding Principles

This procedure outlines the process by which to access clozapine for patients admitted to the Bunbury Hospital after hours.

Aim

The aim of this procedure is to minimise harm to the patient and ensure appropriate governance relating to the supply of medications. Information contained pertains both to the essential criteria required in order to supply clozapine and the resolution of various out of hours scenarios.

WACHS-SW Pharmacy Department (Bunbury Hospital) opening hours:

Monday to Friday 8am to 4.30pm
Excluding Public Holidays

2. Procedure

Clozapine must **not** be administered to patients without first determining the patient's registration, blood test frequency, date of next required blood test and level of compliance.

The following information outlines a step wise approach that the admitting nurse/s and/or medical staff are required to follow in order to obtain clozapine for a patient admitted after hours.

2.1.1 Restrictions regarding the supply of clozapine

Clozapine is prescribed to treat schizophrenia in people unresponsive to, or intolerant of, other antipsychotics. It is a highly effective medication however it does possess some serious and potentially fatal side effects such as neutropaenia, agranulocytosis, myocarditis and cardiomyopathy.

Following the discontinuation of this medication due to the aforementioned side effects, it was re-introduced for use in Australia with stringent monitoring and guidance for use in conjunction with the online clozapine monitoring system (Clopine Central[®]).

Patients prescribed clozapine must be registered with the online database (and subsequently given a registration number) and satisfy baseline testing requirements before they are able to be initiated on the medication.

For 18 weeks after commencement, patients will require weekly full blood counts and monthly full blood counts thereafter for the duration of the time the patient is taking clozapine.

If the patient's white cell or neutrophil counts fall below a specific threshold, the patient may require more frequent monitoring or the use of clozapine may even be ceased.

Clozapine Blood Results Monitoring System		Recommended Action
Green Range	WBC greater than $3.5 \times 10^9/L$ AND Neutrophils greater than $2.0 \times 10^9/L$	Continue clozapine therapy
Amber Range	WBC $3.0 - 3.5 \times 10^9/L$ AND/OR Neutrophils $1.5 - 2.0 \times 10^9/L$	Continue clozapine therapy with twice-weekly blood tests until return to "green" range
Red Range	WBC less than $3.0 \times 10^9/L$ AND/OR Neutrophils less than $1.5 \times 10^9/L$	Stop clozapine therapy immediately. Contact haematologist and Clozapine Monitoring Centre

It is required that the patient's blood test results be entered into ClopineCentral[®] at the time of dispensing. The maximum quantity of clozapine that may be dispensed to a patient will supply them with enough stock until the date of their next blood test. (i.e. If a patient requires weekly blood tests, seven days of clozapine may be supplied from the date the most recent blood test.)

2.1.2 Implications of patient non-compliance

If it is suspected or confirmed that the patient has not taken clozapine for more than 48 hours, the patient must be re-titrated on clozapine, beginning at 12.5mg once or twice daily. If the dose is tolerated, then it may be possible to titrate the doses upwards more quickly than an initial titration.

The standard observations required when titrating clozapine must also be conducted, refer to WA Health [Operational Directive OD 0596/15 Implementation of WA Clozapine Titration and Initiation Chart in Mental Health Units](#) for further information. If it has been more than ten days since the last blood test during a period of non-compliance, a full blood picture will need to be ordered prior to re-titration.

Blood test frequencies will also change if a patient has been non-compliant. If doses have been missed for 72 hours or more (up to four weeks), a patient must have weekly full blood counts for six weeks before they are able to progress to monthly blood counts.

Patients who have not received 18 weekly blood tests prior to the interruption in treatment will require further weekly blood testing until the 18th week is reached. A patient is required to be re-titrated on clozapine and complete 18 weeks of weekly full blood counts if they have not taken clozapine for 4 weeks or more. Refer to WA Health [Operational Directive OD 0596/15 Implementation of WA Clozapine Titration and Initiation Chart in Mental Health Units](#) for further information.

2.2 Procedure for accessing clozapine outside of pharmacy hours – steps to be taken by the admitting nurse / medical officer.

Step 1 – Determine patient compliance, refer to 2.1.2 above.

Step 2 – A registered staff member can log into the online database, Clopine Central[®] (Available from: www.clopine.com.au). The patient's registration number, blood test frequency, date their next blood test is due, date their last blood test was taken and the results of the last blood test are available from the patient's profile.

Alternatively Clopine Central[®] can be contacted on 1800 656 403. Appropriate clinical staff can utilise this number, regardless of registration status with Clopine Central[®].

For the purposes of obtaining information from Clopine Central[®] via phone for a particular patient, you will be asked to provide the patient's initials, the patient's date of birth, your name, location and contact number. Ensure these are determined prior to sourcing the information.

If the request is after hours for Clopine Central[®], there will be a prompt to call an "Emergency On-Call number" to obtain information. The on-call number varies day to day and therefore must be obtained on each occasion.

The "Emergency On-Call" message bank will ask for a message to be left containing the patient's initials, the patient's date of birth, your name, location and contact number. The on-call officer will contact the caller within 30 minutes.

Obtain the patient's registration number, blood test frequency, date their next blood test is due, date their last blood test was taken and the results of the last blood test from the on-call officer. These details should be documented in the patient's notes.

Step 3 – The patient may then be prescribed clozapine at the discretion of the clinician. A titrating dose of clozapine should be prescribed on the Clozapine Initiation and Titration Chart (MR170.4, refer to WA Health [Operational Directive OD 0596/15 Implementation of WA Clozapine Titration and Initiation Chart in Mental Health Units](#) for further information). Stable doses should be charted directly onto the National Inpatient Medication Chart. If it is suspected or confirmed that the patient has not taken clozapine for more than 48 hours, the patient must be re-titrated on clozapine, beginning at 12.5mg once or twice daily, refer to 2.1.2 Non-compliance.

Step 4 – In the event that the patient has been admitted and possesses **clearly labelled boxes of clozapine for themselves**, this patient own stock may be used until pharmacy services are available. Tablets must be in original strip packing to use patient's own supply.

If the patient has presented in the absence of their own medication or it is packed into alternative packaging (i.e. a Webster Pak or a dossette box), after hours stocks of clozapine can be utilised. These specifically labelled suspension and tablets are kept in the PICU imprest cupboard. **These are not to be used during pharmacy business hours.**

Step 5 – At the next available opportunity, the ward clinical pharmacist must be contacted in order to advise of the new admission, update the patient’s online Clopine Central® profile and organise replacement of the after-hours stock. Also contact the Clopine coordinator if the patient is planned for discharge.

2.2 ClopineCentral®

Clopine Central® is the database containing information for all registered clozapine patients, such as their personal details, information regarding their clozapine therapy and blood tests and dispensing history. Doctors, nurses and pharmacists must register with this database in order to access the information. Registration forms for to access Clopine Central® and to register patients may be found on the ward.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All Nursing Staff

All nursing staff are to be familiar with the processes to obtain information to ensure administration of clozapine to patients is safe and accurate.

All Medical Staff

All medical staff are to be familiar with the processes to obtain information to ensure administration of clozapine to patients is safe and accurate.

4. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy document may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Employment Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (HSA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

5. Evaluation

Review of the compliance with this Procedure will be reviewed on an as needed basis by the Chief Pharmacist to determine appropriate access to clozapine after hours.

6. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Care Standards](#): 1.1.1, 1.3.2, 4.1.2, 4.2.2, 4.4.2, 4.6.2 and 4.11.2

[National Standards for Mental Health Services](#): 2.4

7. Related Policies

WA Health [Operational Directive OD 0596/15 Implementation of WA Clozapine Titration and Initiation Chart in Mental Health Units](#)

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 - [Steps to be Undertaken for Patients Taking Clozapine Admitted to Bunbury Hospital Outside of Pharmacy Hours](#)

This table simplifies the step-wise approach to sourcing clozapine for patients after hours. It may be used as a tool to ensure each aspect is covered when accessing clozapine for inpatients after hours.

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

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Appendix 1 - Steps to be Undertaken for Patients Taking Clozapine Admitted to Bunbury Hospital Outside of Pharmacy Hours

<p>STEP 1 Determine patient's compliance.</p>	<p>COMPLIANT Patient to continue at prescribed dose</p>
<p>STEP 2 Obtain patient information from Clopine Central®</p>	<p>NON-COMPLIANT Determine duration of non-compliance and assess whether clozapine requires re-titration. (Refer to 2.1.2 Non-compliance, Procedure for Accessing Clozapine for Patients Admitted to Bunbury Hospital Outside of Pharmacy Hours Procedure)</p> <hr/> <p>Log into Clopine Central® to obtain the patient's registration number, blood test frequency, date their next blood test is due, date their last blood test was taken and the results of the last blood test from the on-call officer. These details should be documented in the patient's notes.</p> <hr/> <p>OR</p> <p>Ensure the patient's initials, the patient's date of birth, your name, location and contact number are at hand. Contact Clopine Central® on 1800 656 403. There will be a prompt to call an "Emergency On-Call number" to obtain information. Leave a message containing the patient's initials, the patient's date of birth, your name, location and contact number. The on-call officer will contact the caller within 30 minutes. Obtain the patient's registration number, blood test frequency, date their next blood test is due, date their last blood test was taken and the results of the last blood test from the on-call officer. These details are to be documented in the patient's notes.</p>
<p>STEP 3 Prescribe clozapine for the patient</p>	<p>The patient may then be prescribed clozapine, taking into consideration any required changes to doses based on patient compliance. Clozapine is to be prescribed on the National Inpatient Medication chart for stable doses or the WA Clozapine Initiation and Titration Chart for titrating doses.</p>

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STEP 4 Access clozapine supplies for the patient	Use patient's own clearly labelled boxes of clozapine for themselves.
	Tablets must be in original strip packaging to use patient's own supply.
	OR
	Utilise the after hours stock kept in the PICU imprest cupboard
STEP 5 Inform staff the next working day	Contact the clinical pharmacist at the next available opportunity to notify them of the new admission. If the patient is planned for discharge, also contact the Clopine coordinator.