



CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 24, 2020

To: CCHCS Systemwide Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, Regional Health Care Executives, Chief Executive Officers, Chief Nurse Executives, Chief Medical Executives, Chiefs of Mental Health, Chief Physician and Surgeons, Chief Support Executives, Correctional Health Services Administrators, Deputy Medical Executives, Health Program Manager Ills, Pharmacists in Charge, Chiefs of Psychiatry, Senior Psychiatrists and Telepsychiatry Leadership, Directors of Nursing, and Supervising Dentists

From: Michael Arca, Assistant Deputy Medical Executive, Clinical Operations Chair, Systemwide Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee

Subject: FORMULARY CHANGES – BUPRENORPHINE/NALOXONE

On April 14, 2020, the Systemwide Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee approved the following changes to the CCHCS Formulary:

1. Remove buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual tablet from the CCHCS Formulary after conversion is complete.
2. Remove buprenorphine-containing film from the Prohibited Dispensing Drug List.
3. Add buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual film to the CCHCS Formulary.

The plan for implementing the systemwide conversion is as follows **starting April 27**:

- Pharmacy shall have procured and stocked buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual film in automated drug delivery system cabinets.
- New patients shall be initiated on the buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual film.
- Providers shall convert patients on buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual tablets to film **by May 8**.

Buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual film are available in the following strengths: 2-0.5 mg, 4-1 mg, 8-2 mg, and 12-3 mg per each film. Dissolution time of the film takes between 4 and 8 minutes.

Nurses should administer other medications due to the patient first with a sip of water before placing a whole buprenorphine-naloxone sublingual film at the base of their tongue. The nurse should hold the patient at the pill window for at least 30 seconds while conveying information and instructions. Advise patients not to talk, swallow, eat, or drink anything until the film is completely dissolved.



Prescribing information for Suboxone® film states:

Place one film under the tongue, close to the base on the left or right side. If an additional film is necessary to achieve the prescribed dose, place an additional film sublingually on the opposite side from the first film. Place the film in a manner to minimize overlapping as much as possible. The film must be kept under the tongue until the film is completely dissolved.

You are directed to train institutional clinical staff to implement.