

# Medication Safety Notice

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Issued by Medicines and Technology Programs, SA Health

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/medicationsafety](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/medicationsafety)



A patient **Safety Notice** strongly advises the implementation of particular recommendations or solutions to improve quality and safety.

## We recommend you inform:

- General Managers
- Pharmacy Directors
- Medical Directors
- Clinical Directors
- Nursing Directors
- Acute Pain Service
- Anaesthesia
- Palliative Care
- SA Ambulance Service
- MedSTAR
- Oncology and Haematology Units
- Infectious Diseases
- Hospital @ Home
- Drug and Therapeutics Committees
- Medication Safety Committees
- Safety and Quality Units
- Clinical Governance

## Contact details:

T: (08) 8204 1944

Email:

[HealthMedicationSafety@sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthMedicationSafety@sa.gov.au)



Government  
of South Australia

SA Health

## National Shortage of Intravenous (IV) Fentanyl

### Purpose

To inform SA Health staff of a national shortage of fentanyl 100 microgram/2 mL injection.

Fentanyl is an opioid analgesic used in the following indications:

- > acute pain
- > opioid adjunct during general and regional anaesthesia

### Summary of issues

Fentanyl 100 microgram/2 mL injection is currently in short supply due to a manufacturing shortage.

At this stage, there is stock available across SA Health sites however the stock levels are critically low.

The TGA has given a S19A approval for a suitable alternative fentanyl 100microgram/2ml product to be imported from Canada for distribution during the shortage.

However it is expected that this product will not be available to SA Health sites until approximately the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has listed the expected timeframe for fentanyl injection supplies to return to normal on their [website](#)

### SA Health Action Plan

SA Pharmacy has worked with Procurement and Local Health Networks to develop a coordinated approach to manage the shortage.

SA Pharmacy is closely monitoring stock levels and coordinating transfers between hospitals as needed.

Stock of fentanyl 500microgram/10ml injection is available and may be considered for use. Whilst this is the same concentration of fentanyl per ml as the 100microgram product, care should be taken in prescribing and administering doses.

Consider a judicious approach to use of fentanyl injection including consideration of clinically suitable alternative opioid analgesics, reserving fentanyl for indications where other agents are not clinically appropriate.

### Action required by SA Health staff:

1. Be aware of the current shortage of fentanyl 100 microgram/2 mL injection.
2. Consider judicious approach to use of fentanyl 100microgram injection.
3. Be aware of availability of fentanyl 500microgram/10ml injection and consider as an alternative where necessary. Whilst this is the same concentration of fentanyl per ml as the 100microgram product, care should be taken in prescribing and administering doses.
4. Consider other clinically suitable alternative opioid analgesics, reserving

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fentanyl for indications where other agents are not clinically appropriate.

5. For specific clinical advice, consult your local pain service or anaesthetic services.

## Action required by SA Health services:

1. Ensure all relevant staff are aware of and have access to this notice.
2. Determine local approach in conjunction with the LHN Pharmacy Department, Pain Service and/or Anaesthetics Service; and/or other local specialists.
3. For any enquires or urgent supply concerns, please contact your Pharmacy Department.

For further information, please email [HealthMedicationSafety@sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthMedicationSafety@sa.gov.au)



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