

## Prescribing of Immediate Release Fentanyl is not supported

**Thurrock CCG, and Basildon and Brentwood CCG do not support the prescribing of immediate release fentanyl products. They offer poor value for money compared to immediate release morphine and there are important safety considerations associated with use of immediate release fentanyl. This position is supported by NHS England.**

Immediate release fentanyl formulations include sublingual tablets (Abstral<sup>®</sup>), buccal tablet (Effentora<sup>®</sup>), lozenges (Actiq<sup>®</sup> and Cynril<sup>®</sup>) and nasal spray (Instanyl<sup>®</sup> and PecFent<sup>®</sup>).

### Recommendations

- Immediate release fentanyl products are licensed only for the management of breakthrough pain in adult patients using maintenance opioid therapy for chronic cancer pain. In line with NICE guidance, offer oral immediate release morphine for the first line rescue medication of breakthrough pain in patients on maintenance oral morphine treatment. Do not offer fast-acting fentanyl as first line rescue medication (a NICE Do Not Do Recommendation).
- Immediate release fentanyl may be considered for breakthrough pain in adult patients using opioid therapy for chronic cancer pain, when other short-acting opioids are unsuitable. Prescribing should be initiated and stabilised by a specialist.
- Use outside of the licence (e.g. for non-cancer pain or for patients not taking at least 60mg of oral morphine daily or equivalent) has safety implications and should be reviewed.
- The availability of a number of different formulations of immediate release fentanyl with different dosage instructions and pharmacokinetic profiles creates potential for prescribing and dispensing errors. Products should be prescribed by brand for any existing prescriptions to reduce this risk.
- Patients regularly using more than 2-4 doses of immediate release fentanyl for breakthrough pain in 24 hours should be reviewed by an appropriate person and an increase of background analgesia considered.

This position is supported by NHS England as part of the items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Thurrock CCG and Basildon and Brentwood CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, or relevant Medicines Management agreement.

<b>Position Statement No.</b>	47
<b>Title</b>	Prescribing of Immediate Release Fentanyl is not supported
<b>References</b>	PrescQIPP bulletin 132 Immediate release fentanyl (DROP-List): <a href="https://www.prescqipp.info/media/1309/b132-fentanyl-drop-list-briefing-21.pdf">https://www.prescqipp.info/media/1309/b132-fentanyl-drop-list-briefing-21.pdf</a>  NHS England guidance on 'Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care' (June 2019): <a href="https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf">https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf</a>
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