There is variation in practice when converting an opioid from one route of administration to another. The chart outlined below reflects the practice at Our Lady’s Hospice and Care Services (OLH&CS). **THE INFORMATION OUTLINED BELOW IS INTENDED AS A GUIDE ONLY.** Other factors may need to be taken into consideration when converting from one route of administration to another including the clinical condition of the patient and patient safety measures. The patient should be monitored very carefully during the route conversion period. Please consider the need for breakthrough pain medication during the route conversion period. **ALL RECOMMENDATIONS OUTLINED BELOW ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING ON THE CLINICAL CONDITION OF THE PATIENT.** Please note that the recommendations below are based primarily on the experience of morphine, oxycodone and hydromorphone administered via continuous subcutaneous infusions (CSCI). Caution is advised when applying these recommendations to the use of methadone or short acting opioids.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Converting To</th>
<th>Oral – sustained release opioid</th>
<th>Fentanyl/Buprenorphine transdermal patch</th>
<th>Opioid CSCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Converting From</td>
<td>(includes MST® tablets/suspension, OxyContin® and Palladone® SR)</td>
<td>Give the last dose of the sustained release opioid and apply the transdermal fentanyl/buprenorphine patch at the same time.</td>
<td>The CSCI should be started about 4 hours before the next oral dose is due in order to maintain analgesia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fentanyl/Buprenorphine transdermal patch**

The clinical condition of the patient should be taken into consideration when carrying out this type of switch over. Remove the transdermal fentanyl patch and administer the sustained release opioid after 8—12 hours.

**Option 1:** Leave the fentanyl transdermal patch in place and supplemental opioid should be administered through the CSCI.

**Option 2:** Remove the fentanyl transdermal patch and commence the CSCI 12 hours later. Monitor for worsening of pain for up to 24 hours.

**Opioid CSCI**

Stop the CSCI as soon as the sustained release oral opioid is administered.

The CSCI should be stopped 12 hours after the transdermal **fentanyl** patch has been applied.

The CSCI should be stopped 12 hours after the transdermal **buprenorphine** patch has been applied.

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