

Codeine is prescription only from 1 February 2018

Start talking to your clients today about this change

Information for NSP workers

Codeine will only be available on prescription from 1 February 2018. From this date, pharmacies will not sell over-the-counter medicines with codeine.

These include combination pain relief medicines like:

- Nurofen Plus
- Mersyndol
- Panadeine
- Some Cold and Flu medicines and some cough syrups
- Any of the generic pain killers / pharmacy medicines that contain codeine.

It is possible that this change will show up significant codeine use and will give you an opportunity to engage with NSP clients.

If your clients need codeine for pain relief you should refer them to a GP.

Possible follow-on effects of this change include:

- People currently using codeine moving to other, potentially dangerous opioids
- Stockpiling codeine medicines
- Doctor-shopping
- People moving to injecting
- People wanting to access opioid treatment

Your service should prepare for these possibilities by speaking to your clients now and providing information about treatment options in your locality and harm reduction advice **including information about overdose and naloxone.**

You can get information on opioid overdose and naloxone on the Penington Institute website <http://www.penington.org.au/programs-and-campaigns/resources/cope-overdose-first-aid/>

Always try to have safer injecting information available, including where to get filters. Most primary NSPs will be able to help NSP clients access these. If you are unsure where your nearest primary NSP is call the helpline below.

To help finding bulk billing GPs and alcohol and other drug services in your area call the **National Alcohol and Other Drug Helpline: 1800 250 015**