

REASON WHY?

On Sheldon Ward at RJAH, we have found that a significant number of patients who come to the ward for rehabilitation are not on buprenorphine (Butrans) patches for adequate pain control. They are commenced on these patches when other measures of pain control are insufficient. However, these are not always reviewed prior to discharge.



The aim is to increase the percentage of review of Butrans patches on discharge TTO medications from 44% to 75% over the following 12 months (November 2024 until November 2025).

PLAN

We planned to review the number of Butrans patches which were started in RJAH and how many of them were reviewed prior to patient discharge into the community.

We were confident that increased staff training & awareness will help to ensure patient's levels of pain, and thus pain control, are reviewed more frequently.



DO

We liaised with nursing and medical staff on the ward regarding current issues with patients going into the community with Butrans patches on their TTO discharge medications. To increase awareness of the issue, we trained healthcare staff involved in administration or review of these patches to be more vigilant in reviewing patient's patches for pain control. We also introduced a patient's pain score scale to be recorded on admission and to be regularly reviewed during ward rounds to establish decline or improvement in pain relief.

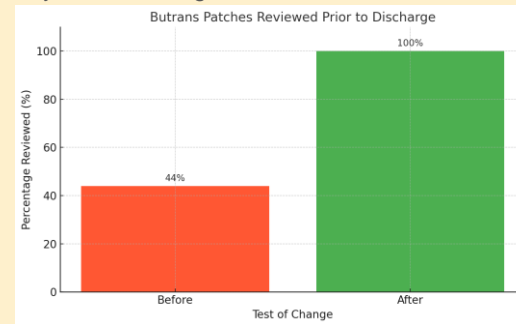
Following this training, we conducted a test of change to determine whether there was increase in Butrans patches reviewed prior to discharge from 44% to 75%, as stated in our project aim.

STUDY

Following our test of change, we noticed the following changes to the number of Butrans patches reviewed prior to patient discharge:

- Before – over the last 12 month, 13 patients had a 5 microgram/hr Butrans patch present on their discharge TTO medications. 9 of these were initiated in RJAH, and only of these patients had their patches reviewed since initiation (44% review rate).
- After – on the ward, there were recently 3 patients who had been commenced on a Butrans patch. All of them have been reviewed prior to patient's discharge into the community with a 100% review rate.

These preliminary results were better than what we expect. However, over time, there could more room for some Butrans patches to be missed and therefore, a further revisit to this project may be necessary at a later stage.



ACT

Following the test of change, it has been agreed that all healthcare staff, including doctors, will be trained at the beginning of their departmental rotations on the importance of reviewing Butrans patches prior to patient discharge and to make use of objective measurement methods such as pain scores.

Moreover, rotating doctors between departments can decide whether any tweaking of current methodologies employed are necessary.