



Standard Determinate Sentence (SDS) 40 Impact on Community Pharmacy

Dear Pharmacist,

Standard Determinate Sentence (SDS) 40 legislation is currently going through parliament and will become law in September 2024.

This legislation will result in people in prison being released from custody earlier than indicated by the judiciary at the point of sentencing.

The SDS mobilisation will be rolled out in two tranches – tranche 1 on the 10th September for those with sentences of 5 years or less and tranche 2 on the 22nd October for those with sentences of 5 years or more, to be completed by the 16th December 2024.

Probation Delivery Units and Offender Management Units in Prisons are aware who this new legislation applies to and are working with drug and alcohol treatment teams in the community and prisons to co-ordinate pre/ post release arrangements.

What does this mean for community drug and alcohol treatment providers and pharmacies?

The effect of SDS on Via services will be determined by the number of people in prisons being released to each Local Authority area.

The impact of this legislation on individual service area is as yet unknown – there is likely to be short term spikes on or around the 10th September and the 22nd October.

At this time our service leaders are working with Probation and the Prisons to determine the numbers that will be returning to the community who require supervision and/ or dispensing of opiate substitution therapy, and are agreeing local arrangements to meet the drug and alcohol support needs of people leaving custody on the 10th September and 22nd October.

Understanding the current operational pressures being experienced by pharmacies, we are notifying you of this in advance to allow you to make any necessary preparations with regards to management of stock, workload and capacity.

We anticipate having more information on expected numbers requiring opiate substitution therapy throughout August and in the first week of September. It is our intention to communicate and plan collaboratively with individual pharmacies once we have confirmed details of service users being released from custody.

Feedback from community pharmacy teams about our service user's welfare is vital to us and at times you may have more face-to-face contact with them than the people who work in our services do. The effect of SDS may vary according to locality, impacting some pharmacies more than others, if at any stage you are concerned about anyone you are dispensing to, or wish to discuss a person's wellbeing or opiate substitution treatment please do contact your local Via prescribing service.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mak Chohan', on a light-colored background.

Mak Chohan

Director of Pharmacy