



## FENTANYL PATCHES TAPERING GUIDANCE

It is not recommended to convert fentanyl to another opioid as conversions are unreliable and may result in overdose.

Taper down fentanyl patches by 12-25microgram/hour every 2-4 weeks.

Consider adding in morphine sulfate oral solution (age related dose as shown on the WSCCG Chronic Pain Ladder) 4-6 hourly when required, up to a maximum of 20mg/day. This is for breakthrough pain when tapering fentanyl, especially at lower doses. Advise lowest effective dose for the shortest period of time.  $\leq 3$  days is usually sufficient.

When the patient's dose of transdermal fentanyl is 12microgram/hour, discontinue the patch and only use morphine sulfate oral solution.

Titrate down morphine sulfate oral solution to intermittent use for the management of flare ups.

### **Caution:**

Following fentanyl patch removal it takes approximately  $\geq 17$  hours for serum concentrations of fentanyl to decrease by 50% or more.