

Center for Mental Health Services
Center for Substance Abuse
Prevention
Center for Substance Abuse
Treatment
Rockville MD 20857

NOV 7 2005

SAMHSA/CSAT Guidance 2006-01

Dear Colleague:

The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment's (CSAT) Division of Pharmacologic Therapies (DPT) frequently receives requests to implement an *extended holiday schedule* resulting in the program closing and providing take-home medication to the patients for more than the specific Federal and State approved holiday. CSAT/DPT does **not** review and approve requests for program closures; however, the DPT **does** review and approve requests for patient exception under the Federal Opioid Treatment Regulations (42 CFR § 811(h)). Most of these exceptions pertain to patients who need additional take-home medications, but have not as yet been in treatment sufficient time to satisfy the regulatory schedule. Therefore, instead of requiring individual patient exceptions, CSAT/DPT will consider and approve if appropriate, **program-wide** requests to permit all patients who satisfy the criteria to receive the requested *extended holiday* medications in addition to the Federal and State approved specific holidays.

In order to approve these requests, programs must submit a description of **how recent admissions and unstable patients not satisfying criteria for unsupervised medication (take-homes) will be medicated** while their program is closed for the proposed *extended holiday schedule*.

As with all requests for exception, the *extended holiday schedule* and method of medicating unstable patients over the proposed *extended holiday period* must also be approved by the State Methadone Authority before implementation (if applicable).

Should a program decide to open for abbreviated hours on the *extended holiday day* in lieu of closing and making other arrangements to medicate unstable patients, such as at an open, nearby treatment program or hospital pharmacy, etc., no Federal approval would be required.

For additional information or questions regarding this policy, please contact Mr. C. Todd Rosendale at (240) 276-2717 or Mr. Nicholas Reuter at (240) 276-2716.

Sincerely,

H. Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., CAS, FASAM
Director
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment