Benzodiazepine Tapering Algorithm

Has the patient been on benzodiazepine for over 6 months?
- Consider initiating Benzo/Stimulant/hypnotic agreement
- Consider UA testing with PPMD
- Consider PMP review

Did patient have an anxiety disorder before initiation of benzodiazepine(s)?
- Consider GAD-7 and PHQ-2 (PHQ-9)

Recommend up to 2 month taper

Prior to beginning taper:
1. Initiate an SSRI
2. Over 3 weeks, increase dose to moderate or high (sertraline 100-200 mg daily or equivalent)
3. For breakthrough panic attacks, consider either:
   a. Propranolol 10-20mg before event
   b. Hydroxyzine 10mg up to QID (avoid in elderly)

Initiate benzo taper using 16 week taper plan. Recommend monthly assessment OV

If SSRI initiation and planned taper not successful or resisted, obtain Behavioral Health consult

Consider alternatives for:
1) Sleep
   a) Sleep hygiene
   b) Medication at HS
      i) Doxepin 10mg/mL 3-6 mg at bedtime or
      ii) Melatonin 0.5-6mg 30 min to 4 hours before HS
      iii) Trazodone 25-50 mg at bedtime or
      iv) Nortriptyline 10-20mg at bedtime (avoid in elderly) or
      v) Diphenhydramine –avoid in elderly
   c) Consider BH referral for sleep CBT
   d) Consider sleep referral if 30 days meds ineffective
2) Restless leg syndrome: pramipexole or ropinirole
3) Spasticity – baclofen or tizanidine

References:

Resources
Providence Recovery Center
916 Pacific Ave
Everett, WA
425-258-7390

Evergreen Recovery Center
2601 Summit Ave
Everett, WA
425-258-2407

Swedish Addiction Recovery - Ballard
5300 Tallman Ave N.W.
Seattle, WA
206-781-6048

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