### 13.3.4 The discharge prescription from the emergency department

A patient should not receive a prescription for analgesics without a diagnosis. If a diagnosis is not clear, the patient must be referred for further evaluation as either an in- or outpatient. If the doctor is of the opinion that it is safe to discharge the patient, they must be advised on the symptoms to look for and instructed to return if necessary.

A prescription consisting of paracetamol and an NSAID is usually safe. The drugs should be taken around the clock for approximately 24 hours and longer if necessary. An opioid may be added for breakthrough pain or when NSAIDs are contraindicated. The number of opioid tablets/capsules should not exceed 10 units containing approximately 5 mg MMEs. This practice may decrease the availability of unused opioids that can land up in the hands of people who misuse opioids.