

Please keep this booklet inside the syringe driver box (and ensure it is returned with the syringe driver).

# Syringe Driver Handbook

A Guide for patients and Families



Many thanks to Hibiscus Hospice for allowing us to use their publication as a guide.

**Mercy Hospice Auckland**  
Te Korowai Atawhai  
61 College Hill  
Ponsonby 1011  
P O Box 47 693, Ponsonby 1144  
Ph: 09 361 5966  
Fax: 09 361 5977  
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*He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.*

It is  
**people**















# Education Checklist

## Syringe Driver /PRN Medication Administration; In Home Training

NB: The names of all family members trained in Syringe Driver management should be recorded in the patient file

### Area of training

#### SYRINGE DRIVER AND PRN DRUG ADMINISTRATION:

- Patient is willing for nominated family member or caregiver to administer subcutaneous medication.
- Nominated person(s) is willing to administer the subcutaneous medications.
- Can identify where the 24hr hospice phone number is available.
- Patient understands reasons for medication/s administration and when they can be given.
- There is a clear PRN Prescription in the home stating:
  - Medication, Dose, Route, Specific Symptom it is used for, Minimum time interval between doses.
  - Number of times it can be administered in 24 hours before contacting a Doctor.
- Nominated person(s) demonstrated competence in flushing line using needleless system.
- Nominated person(s) understands importance of recording medications given.
- Nominated person(s) understand medications to be kept in the fridge until used or returned to Pharmacy.

#### SYRINGE DRIVER ONLY ADMINISTRATION:

- Demonstrates they can locate, read and understand information contained in the Syringe Driver Handbook.
- Is able to verbalise what to expect and responsibilities of syringe driver use and their role.
- Demonstrates:
  - A basic knowledge of the syringe driver use
  - The reasons for starting the syringe driver
  - The care of the syringe driver
  - The Medication
- Demonstrates the areas to be checked on the syringe driver:
  - Display screen
  - LED Indicator
  - Battery level
  - Infusion line
  - Insertion site
- Is able to verbalise the safe storage and disposal of medications and syringes and understands that any unused medication is to be returned to pharmacy.
- Is able to accurately complete the appropriate syringe driver documentation sheet
- Demonstrates how to change the pre-filled syringe in syringe driver including the correct syringe identification
- Demonstrates ability to troubleshoot solutions to the following problems:
  - Occlusion alarm
  - End of syringe alarm
  - Low battery level alarm

# and Alarms

there is a problem. There are 2 types of warning systems:

### Alarms

- An alarm will sound continuously.
- The infusion will stop.
- The LED indicator turns to red.
- A message appears on the display screen indicating the cause.

### action to take for each problem:

| Action   |
|--|
| Press YES to restart.  |
| Change battery.  |
| Prepare to change syringe or turn off driver.                                |
| Change battery (refer page 12).  |
| Press STOP/NO. Change syringe (refer pages 8-9).                             |
| Reposition the syringe and connections.<br>Check that it is loaded properly. |
| Turn syringe driver off and phone hospice for assistance.                    |
| Turn syringe driver off and phone hospice.                                   |

few times each day, that the LED indicator is flashing green delivering'. It is not necessary to check overnight.



# Record each time you change a syringe

## SUBCUTANEOUS MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION RECORD | SYRINGE DRIVER RECORDING ONLY

Patient name \_\_\_\_\_

| DATE | SITE CHECK | SIGNATURE | NEXT DUE       |
|------|------------|-----------|----------------|
|      |            |           | Date:<br>Time: |

### Steps Action

- 12 Slot the syringe into place. Make sure the labels are facing away from the barrel. The syringe collar should be straight up and down.
- 13 Secure the syringe with the barrel clamp.
- 14 Take the cap off the syringe - do not touch the end of the syringe or let it touch anything as this may cause contamination.
- 15 Take the tubing off the empty syringe. NB. It can be difficult to detach.
- 16 Transfer the tubing to the new syringe. NB. It is acceptable to have a small amount of air in the tubing. This will be absorbed without causing any harm.
- 17 Check the syringe size and brand against the information on the display screen. If correct, press YES key to confirm. If incorrect use the +/- arrow keys to change. Then press YES.
- 18 Check all information on the display screen is correct for the infusion. Check the amount in the syringe is close to the amount shown on the screen. If it is not, phone hospice.
- 19 Once you are sure everything is correct, press YES key to confirm.
- 20 Press YES key again to start the infusion.
- 21 Check the syringe driver is running:
  - The LED indicator should be flashing green every 30 seconds
  - The display screen should be showing <<<<< pump delivering.
- 22 Record the time of this infusion and sign on the 'Syringe Driver Medications Record Sheet'.
- 23 If the medication in the syringes are changed, ensure you discard any previous syringes or return to pharmacy.



## Record each time you administer PRN medication

### SUBCUTANEOUS MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION RECORD | PRN MEDICATION RECORDING ONLY

Patient name \_\_\_\_\_

Names and Signatures of designated family members:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

| DATE | MEDICATION GIVEN | DOSAGE | SITE CHECK (TICK IF CHECKED) | SIGNATURE |
|------|------------------|--------|------------------------------|-----------|
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|      |                  |        |                              |           |
|      |                  |        |                              |           |

## Showering and Bathing

**The syringe driver cannot be immersed in water.**

**Before showering or bathing:**

- 1 Press STOP key.
- 2 Press & hold OFF key until a beep is heard – screen will go blank.
- 3 Disconnect line from the syringe, cap both ends with the little blue or white plugs supplied.
- 4 Do not remove the syringe from the syringe driver.

**After showering or bathing:**

- 1 Reconnect line to the syringe.
- 2 Press and hold ON button until the light on the display comes on.
- 3 Wait until the picture of the syringe on the display disappears.
- 4 Press YES to confirm syringe brand and size. If incorrect, use the + or - keys to change. Then press yes.
- 5 Press YES to resume infusion.
- 6 Press YES to confirm remaining volume, duration and rate of infusion
- 7 Press YES to start the infusion.

**The syringe driver must NOT be immersed in water or worn during showering or bathing.**

**If the driver does accidentally get wet, STOP the infusion and inform Mercy Hospice Auckland immediately.**

## If the syringe driver is dropped

It is likely to turn itself off. If this happens check the battery is in place and ensure the syringe is in place. Turn it back on and push the yes key to resume.

## Definition of PRN medication.

PRN is the abbreviation for the latin, Pro re nata – meaning: In the circumstances OR as the circumstances arise. PRN is commonly used in medicine to mean “as needed” or as the situation arises. It refers to a dose(s) of medication that is not scheduled, but instead left to the prerogative of a nurse, caregiver or patient.

PRN medication is usually given for pain, anxiety, nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath, seizures or a bleed.



Referred to in step 5.  
Push syringe into valve here.

## Administering PRN medication.

Your doctor and hospice nurse may have decided to place some additional syringes filled with (PRN) medication in your refrigerator.

These are for you to use if symptoms of pain, nausea or vomiting appear suddenly; become severe or happen during the night.

There will be medication in individually pre-filled syringes that can be given over a 24 hour period, AND pre-filled syringes of sterile saline to be used after each administration of a PRN drug along with a clear care plan for each medication.

The person(s) trained to give the PRN medication must enter the details of any injection they administer, in the PRN medication record sheet on page 16.

### **To administer PRN medication:**

- 1 Check the site where it is going into the skin. Please ensure that the skin is not red, hot, blanched (white), tender, hard, swollen or oozing. If any of these signs are present, please phone the Hospice for further advice.
- 2 Remove syringe from plastic bag and check label to ensure you are giving the right drug.
- 3 Take the cap off the syringe.
- 4 Do not touch the end of syringe or let it touch anything.
- 5 Connect syringe by pushing into valve (pictured left) and turn clockwise. Once in place, slowly push plunger to administer medication.
- 6 Once the syringe is empty, unscrew and remove it. Leave valve in place. Repeat the process with a syringe of the sterile saline to flush the line.
- 7 Discard any unused medication by washing down the sink or return to any pharmacy.