

Supporting Care Homes

JUST IN CASE MEDICATION

GUIDANCE SHEET

Prescribing for residents who require palliative care can be complex as their needs may change without warning. To help anticipate changes, a GP may decide to prescribe Just in Case (JIC) or anticipatory medication before it is needed

What is just in case medication?

- Medication obtained in advance for health professionals to use if, or when, a resident's condition changes.
- A small selection of drugs will be prescribed for an individual resident.

The instructions for the use of these medications relate to one-off or single use. JIC medication should not be confused with syringe driver medication.

Community pharmacies may not keep all the drugs in stock, but will be able to order them in (usually within 24 hours).

Why use it?

- Prevents the distressing situation of struggling to obtain specific medications quickly if a resident's condition changes, particularly during evenings or weekends.
- Provision of JIC medication has been shown to help avoid hospital admissions.

What do I do with JIC medications?

- If supplied in a box or bag, open the container and check the contents on receipt.
- If space permits, the complete JIC medication supply should be stored in the CD cupboard (unless there are no CDs).
- If there is limited room, the CDs should be removed from the box or bag and stored in the CD cupboard with the remainder of the container stored with the resident's other medication. Make a note that the CDs are in the CD cupboard.
- CDs that have been removed from the JIC medication supply, should be clearly marked to show that they are part of a JIC medication regimen, as they come with specific instructions for use.
- The CDs must be entered into the CD register in the usual way.

Items which could be prescribed for JIC use:

Drug	Used for	Must be kept in CD cupboard?	Must be listed in CD register?
Diamorphine	Pain and shortness of breath	Yes	Yes
Haloperidol	Confusion	No	No
Levomepromazine	Sickness	No	No
Hyoscine or Glycopyrronium	Secretions in the throat	No	No
Midazolam	Restlessness	No	No

Record keeping when the medication is used

- **Care homes without nursing:** On the MAR chart use the code for 'see back of chart'. On the reverse, write that the medication has been administered by the district nurses. The district nurses will write on their own MAR chart. Remember to inform the GP that the JIC meds have been used so that they can be reviewed or replenished as necessary.
- **Care homes with nursing:** Record full details of dose given, date and time on the MAR chart. Remember to inform the GP that the JIC meds have been used so that they can be reviewed or replenished as necessary.

How long is the medication kept for?

The medication may be kept until needed by the resident; this may be some time. It is important that the expiry dates are checked regularly. Sometimes a resident's health may improve, and will no longer require these JIC medications and can be disposed of as follows (on the advice of the GP):

Care homes without nursing:

- If medication is out of date it should be returned to the pharmacy and the prescriber informed.

Care homes with nursing:

- CDs should be denatured by a registered nurse in the presence of a witness using a specially designed denaturing kit before being handed to the waste disposal company. The prescriber should be informed.

What happens if a resident has a syringe driver?

- It is entirely possible for a resident to have a syringe driver in use and still have unopened JIC medications as well. The JIC medication may have instructions for use if the resident's condition changes again.
- Once a resident is on a syringe driver, further supplies of medication for the syringe driver will be prescribed specifically for the syringe driver.

Use of register for additional supplies of diamorphine

Use one page for each strength of diamorphine (if there is more than one).

Further supplies of the same strength should be added to the same page in the register.

Example of register entry

DIAMORPHINE INJECTION 5mg JANE DOE

Amounts obtained			Amounts administered							
Amount	Date received	Requisition no.	Date	Time	Resident name	Amount given	Amount wasted	Given by	Witnessed by	Balance
5	12/1/18	Smiths pharmacy						MN	BF	5
			13/1/18	13.00	Jane Doe	5mg	-	MN	JK	4
10	15/1/18	Smiths pharmacy						BF	JK	14

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Please visit our website for more information: <https://www.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/medicines-in-care-homes>

With special thanks to NHS Northern, Eastern and Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group NHS South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group for sharing this resource

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