



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



Clinical Advisory

To: Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics, Emergency Medical Technicians,
Emergency Medical Controllers

c.c.: NAS Leadership Team

From: Medical Director

Date: December 1st 2011

Subject: **Subcutaneous syringe-driver infusions in palliative care patients**

Dear colleagues,

Patients with life-limiting conditions who are receiving care from specialist palliative care teams often receive a variety of medications via subcutaneous syringe driver infusions. The syringe drivers are programmed and portable, battery operated infusion devices. A variety of medications may be infused in this manner, including opioid analgesics, anti-emetics, antisecretory agents, anticonvulsants and anxiolytics. These infusions are commonly used by palliative care teams because of their suitability for administration in home environment- they do not require continuous monitoring by nursing or other healthcare staff.

Patients receiving medications via this route being transported by NAS do not require a nursing escort from the referring institution, and may be transported by all grades of clinical staff, including Intermediate Care Vehicle staff. Transporting crews should liaise closely with the staff in the referring institution regarding the use of such pumps.

NB This advisory applies only to **subcutaneous** infusions, and does not apply to intravenous infusions.

**Dr. Cathal O'Donnell,
Medical Director,
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Health Service Executive.**

Seirbhís Náisiúnta Otharchair
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