

Palliative Care MAR charts: information for health care professionals

Why do we need a new chart?

A new palliative care MAR chart is now being used in Somerset. These have been designed following feedback, audit and datix reviews relating to prescribing. They are ready to use and are being used in many areas in the county already.

The chart has the current Somerset Just in Case (JIC) prescribing guidance on the front sheet. This provides the first line options for just in case prescribing. The first full page is for the sc prn JIC medication. The next 2 full pages are for syringe pump prescriptions. This includes guidance on safe syringe pump prescribing. On the back is the opioid conversion information.

When should they be used?

The charts are only for prescription and administration of sc medications for palliative care patients for their injectable medication to maintain symptom control. They are not for administration of oral or transdermal medication or other sc injections such as clexane: these prescriptions should be on the existing purple MAR.

They are available for use in the community setting. Patients being discharged from acute hospitals with JIC medication should have this medication prescribed on this chart, as should those being transferred from community hospital to home. These charts are also used for any syringe pump prescription.

In community hospitals, palliative MAR charts should be used for patients who require a syringe driver as the electronic system does not manage syringe drivers well. In this situation, other medication should be recorded on a purple MAR chart. They do not replace electronic prescribing or acute hospital MAR charts.

What should we do with existing purple MAR charts?

If a patient has an existing purple MAR chart with JIC medications prescribed, there is no need to transcribe this onto a new chart. If the purple chart needs to be rewritten then the new chart should be used.

How do we get hold of the new charts?

The charts are now available to order on Integra (code CSP076295). Each DN hub will order a supply and will continue to use existing local processes to provide these to the GP surgeries to ensure timely provision of JIC medication in the community setting. The discharge and palliative care teams in the acute hospitals will be issued with a supply from their local DN hubs. These are:

Musgrove	Taunton DN Hub at Parkgate	0300 323 0026
YDH	South Somerset Yeovil DN Hub at Magnolia	0300 323 0020
Weston	North Sedgemoor DN Hub at Peter Holmes	0300 323 0025
RUH	East Mendip DNs at Frome GP practice	0300 323 0117

The out of hours GP service and ambulance service will be supplied by the palliative care team. Contact rachel.cook@sompar.nhs.uk. Hospice teams can access the charts through DN hubs.

A pilot of a version of the chart that is printable in a GP surgery is planned and is subject to further development.