TOP TIPS: **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS**

Getting palliative medications right at home, in hospital and hospice

Good to know...

- It is never too early to involve palliative care colleagues when symptoms are difficult to control.
- Small differences matter. You can help patients and/or carers by explaining the reasons for changes to prescribed medication, including if the appearance of medication has changed.

Red flags – what's important to share...

- It is important to agree with people preferred ways to communicate e.g. text/email and to have a backup mode if you don't get a response or are unsure if messages are getting through.
- If the prescriber of medication and the colleague visiting the patient are different, there can be differences in opinion about what is the most appropriate prescription. Creating time for a two-way discussion (in real time if urgent) can save time overall and make care more effective.
- To check if interest and capability for patients to self-administer medication or for carers to administer medication remains the same at each appointment, giving support if needed.

What works well...

- Raising awareness in non-clinical staff (e.g. administrative staff) about palliative medication needs so response times and input from the right person can be as efficient as possible.
- Investing time in listening to a carer's knowledge and experience of managing medication at home. Relieving them of logistical and technical responsibilities when possible. Giving clear information about systems when support is needed.
- A relational approach when collaborating with colleagues (getting to know each other, working as a team across organisational boundaries, dialogue, and discussion) can lead to reduced overall workload and greater whole system effectiveness.

Who can help with challenges?

- Patients and families can help if they are included as part of the medication team.
- Specialist link workers (e.g. integrated care community pharmacy technicians) can review medication with patients in their own homes and feedback to healthcare staff.
- Ask your local community pharmacy if they have signed up to the Daffodil Standards for palliative and end of life care. They may be able to offer extra support.

Where did this come from?
www.ucl.ac.uk/psychiatry/research/marie-curie-palliative-care-research-department/research/activity-theory-analysis

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Getting palliative medications right

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