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- NHS hospitals and clinics
- GPs
- Social care

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- provision of health or social care or treatment
- medical diagnosis
- preventative or occupational medicine
- management of health or social care systems and services, carried out by, or under the supervision of health professional or another person, who in the circumstances owes a duty of confidentiality under an enactment or rule of law

Our privacy notice is available at [medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/privacy/](https://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/privacy/)

Who to contact

Palliative Care Service Manager

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Medway Community Healthcare CIC providing services on behalf of the NHS
Registered office: MCH House, Bailey Drive, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0PZ
Tel: 01634 337593
Registered in England and Wales, Company number: 07275637

If you would like to view or request a copy of your patient record, please email medch.dataprotection@nhs.net or call 01634 334640. In most instances this service is free and we aim to provide the requested information within 1 calendar month. More information can be found by visiting: [medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/information-about-me/](https://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/information-about-me/)

Medway Community Healthcare provides a wide range of high quality community health services for Medway residents; from community nurses and health visitors to speech and language therapists and out of hours urgent care.

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Customer care

Please send any comments about Medway Community Healthcare services to: -
Customer care coordinator
Medway Community Healthcare
MCH House, Bailey Drive, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 0PZ
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All contact will be treated confidential

This information can be made available in other formats and languages. Please contact: medch.communications@nhs.net

Ref: MCH 456



Syringe drivers Neighbourhood Nursing Team



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Introduction

The purpose of this leaflet is to expand on what you have already been told by your nurse or doctor about the use of the syringe driver. You and your carer can read it at leisure. It should help to answer some of the common questions you may have. If you would like any more information please ask your nurse or doctor.

What is a syringe driver?

A syringe driver is a small lightweight, battery operated portable pump although in hospital it can be a larger mains operated pump. It makes it possible for your medication to be delivered slowly and steadily over an extended period – usually 24 hours. The syringe connected to the syringe driver will be filled with medication to suit your symptoms. This will be reviewed on a regular basis and may change as necessary.

How will it be connected to me?

Medication in injection form is put into a syringe, and a long thin tube, with a tiny needle or plastic tube connected to it. The nurse or doctor will insert the needle just under the skin and apply a clear dressing to keep it clean, dry and in place.

The most usual places for inserting the needle are the chest or upper arm, although other parts of the body may be chosen for your comfort or convenience. Once the needle is in place, you should not feel it and it can usually stay in place for several days.

Why do I need a syringe driver?

Syringe drivers are used for a number of reasons. Not all of these reasons will apply to you, but the most common are:

- It is a simpler and more comfortable way of receiving medication for people who would otherwise need repeat injections
- Some people find it difficult to swallow their medication in tablet or syrup form
- Some people may be feeling sick, or be vomiting so cannot keep medicines in their stomach for long enough for them to work properly.

What do I need to watch out for?

Sometimes, the medication in the syringe can cause a skin reaction. Your nurse will be checking for this regularly. If you notice

any redness or swelling yourself, report it to your nurse. If any area becomes sore, another part of your body might be used.

Syringe drivers are quite sturdy, but they can be damaged if they are dropped or accidentally stood on. They must not get wet, so you will need to ask for advice from your nurse about washing and showering.

Within the syringe driver, there is an alarm which will bleep if there is a problem. Usually, the alarm sounds for one or two reasons:

- Sometimes the long tubing can kink, causing a blockage to the flow of medication
- The syringe is empty

If you have any problems, please contact your nurse as soon as possible – otherwise you might start to feel uncomfortable.

The small light on the front of the syringe driver flashes regularly to show the battery and syringe driver are working. If this stops, a new battery might be required. Please contact your nurse.

It is best to keep the syringe contents out of direct sunlight, and it is important the contents do not become too warm. Please ask for advice on the best place to keep your syringe driver.