

## Subcutaneous PRN Medication Prescriber Guideline

Prescriber instructions- Choose **ONE** medication from each group **(ABCD)** for optimal symptom control. Order medications for a 24-72hr period for the purpose of relieving anticipated or escalating end of life symptoms. **Send completed authority form to [Nurses@hospiceebop.org.nz](mailto:Nurses@hospiceebop.org.nz)**

**Prescriptions are sent to the patient's own pharmacy.**

**Prescriptions for subcutaneous medications are sent to Kawerau Pharmacy for pre-filled syringes.**

**For further guidance please contact Hospice on 07 3072244**

	Medication	Indication	Ampoule strength / concentration	# ampoules or bottles	Route, Frequency, see page 2 for dosage guidance
<b>A</b>	Morphine	Pain and dyspnoea	10mg/ml	10x 1ml + rpt	subcut q1hrly prn
	Oxycodone	Pain and dyspnoea	10mg/ml	10 x 1ml + rpt	subcut q1hrly prn
	Fentanyl (for use in renal failure)	Pain and dyspnoea	100mcg/2ml	10x2ml + rpt	subcut q1hrly prn
<b>B</b>	Haloperidol	Agitation/delirium, Nausea/vomiting	5mg/ml	5 x 1ml + rpt	subcut q4hrly prn
	Levomepromazine (Nozinan)	Agitation/delirium, Nausea/vomiting (anxiety and dyspnoea)	25mg/ml	5 x 1ml + rpt	subcut q4hrly prn
<b>C</b>	Midazolam	Seizures	15mg/3ml (Plastic ampoules)	5 x 3ml + rpt	subcut/sublingual stat, repeat q5min if seizure persists
	Midazolam	Dyspnoea, agitation/delirium	15mg/3ml	5 x3ml + rpt	subcut q1hrly prn
	Clonazepam <b>drops</b>	Anxiety, seizures	2.5mg/ml 1 drop = 100mcg	1 OP (original pack) =10ml	2-3 drops sublingual prn
<b>D</b>	Hyoscine butylbromide (Buscopan)	Upper airways secretions	20mg/ml	10 x 1ml + rpt	20mg subcut 2-4hrly prn

A	Morphine	<b>PAIN OR DYSPNOEA</b> <u>Opioid naïve:</u> 1-2.5mg subcut q1hr prn <u>On opioids:</u> <b>Subcut dose is half the oral dose</b> prn dose is usually one-tenth to one-sixth of total daily dose <i>ie. total daily subcut dose = total daily dose ÷ 2</i> <i>Given over 24hr via continuous subcut infusion</i>	
	Oxycodone	<b>PAIN OR DYSPNOEA</b> <u>Opioid naïve:</u> 1-2.5mg subcut q1h prn NOTE: 1mg oxycodone = 1.5-2mg morphine <u>On opioids:</u> <b>Subcut dose is half the oral dose</b> prn dose is usually one-tenth to one sixth of total daily dose <i>ie. total daily subcut dose = total daily dose ÷ 2</i> <i>Given over 24hr via continuous subcut infusion</i>	
	Fentanyl (for use in renal failure)	<b>PAIN OR DYSPNOEA</b> <u>Opioid naïve:</u> 25-50mcg subcut q1hrly prn <i>Start at lower dose</i> <u>On current fentanyl transdermal patch:</u> Leave existing patch on and prescribe subcut PRNs for breakthrough pain - prn dose is usually one-tenth of total daily dose	
B	Haloperidol	<b>AGITATION/DELIRIUM</b> Mild: 0.5-1mg subcut q4h prn Moderate: 1-2mg q4hr prn Severe: 2.5mg subcut q4hr prn <i>If symptoms not controlled, consider switch to another agent eg Nozinan</i>	<b>NAUSEA/VOMITING</b> 0.5-1mg q2-4hr prn Consider commencing 1mg over 24hr via continuous subcut infusion (CSCI)
	Levomepromazine (Nozinan)	<b>AGITATION/DELIRIUM</b> Mild: 6.25mg subcut q4h prn Moderate: 6.25-12.5mg q4hr prn Severe: seek advice <i>Note: typically, more sedating than haloperidol</i>	<b>NAUSEA/VOMITING</b> 3.125 - 6.25 subcut q4hr prn <i>Note: consider giving over 24hr via CSCI if using frequent doses or inability to administer frequent prns</i>
C	Midazolam	<b>AGITATION/DISTRESS/DELIRIUM</b> 2.5-5mg q1hr prn Note: consider starting at lower 1mg dose if benzo-naïve, may be added to CSCI, consider ability to administer <i>Benzodiazepines usually reserved second line for delirium after anti-psychotic</i>	<b>SEIZURE</b> 5-10mg stat subcut, repeat every 5-10min to maximum of three doses if seizure persists <i>Note: notify doctor if 3 doses are used</i>
	Clonazepam Drops	<b>AGITATION/DISTRESS/DELIRIUM</b> <b>2-3 drops q4hr prn</b> <i>Benzodiazepines usually reserved second line for delirium after anti-psychotic</i>	<b>SEIZURE</b> 3-5 drops stat, may repeat after 10min to a maximum of three doses <i>Note: Notify doctor if 3 doses are used, consider changing to another agent eg midazolam</i>
D	Hyoscine butylbromide (Buscopan)	<b>UPPER AIRWAYS SECRETIONS</b> 20mg sc q2-4hr prn Max 120mg/24hrs	

Adapted from Hospice Waikato 2023