Opioid substitution treatment pathway:
for patients no longer able to take oral maintenance methadone in last days /weeks of life.

**NB** Keep maintenance methadone completely separate from analgesics

### Pain control
- Treat patient’s pain as if not taking any opioids (which includes methadone)

### Methadone maintenance
- Usual oral methadone dose

### Unable to swallow oral opioids for pain control in last days/weeks of life
- Syringe driver is required for subcutaneous opioids
  - See conversion chart
- Separate syringe driver chart for pain and symptom control
- Anticipatory drugs
  - Keep in safe repository

### Methadone maintenance
- Switch to subcutaneous (sc) methadone
- **Calculation**
  Half oral methadone dose to get sc dose
  e.g. oral methadone 40mg divide by 2 = 20mg methadone sc over 24hours
- Diluent is 0.9% normal saline
- Separate syringe driver chart for subcutaneous methadone prescription

### Practicalities for injectable methadone, opioids and anticipatory drugs
- Safekeeping, storage & governance of CDs
- Access to drugs
- Prescriber
- Education for healthcare professionals
  *See local policies for your area*

### Safekeeping, storage and governance of injectable methadone/opioids
- **Patient’s home**
  - safe repository/ locked box
- **Organisation** Spectrum
  - Changing lives" (York)
  - North Yorkshire Horizons (North Yorkshire)
- **Safe required**- for injectable medication
- Injectable medication will be managed by community health professionals

### Where to access injectable methadone?
- Community pharmacy (ring palliative care for named pharmacies)
  - methadone and anticipatory drugs
- Hospital pharmacy (in emergency)

### Who can prescribe injectable methadone?
- Doctors in “Spectrum”- NMP can continue methadone prescription
- Palliative medicine consultant
- **Recommend only one prescriber** for injectable methadone

### References
- Clinical guidelines on drug misuse and dependence. UK guidelines on clinical management. Update 2017 DoH
- Palliative care formulary
- PCF 6
- Methadone guidelines York Hospitals NHSFT- revising

Owner: Dr Anne Garry, York Teaching Hospitals NHSFT, Issue: April 2019 Version 1