

Morphine sulphate oral solution (*Oramorph*[®]) - Reducing inappropriate prescribing to increase availability for those who need it.

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The increased number of patients requiring End of Life treatment over the last few months has created national pressure on supplies of medicines used in palliative care. Morphine sulphate oral solution (*Oramorph*[®]) has been particularly affected by a large increase in demand especially as it is also being used in critical care units when weaning patients off ventilators.

In order to minimise waste and to maintain the supply chain, volumes of morphine sulphate oral solution for End of Life prescriptions have been restricted.

The Medicines Management Team have identified a cohort of non-palliative patients in primary care receiving prescriptions for large volumes of morphine sulphate oral solution on a long term, on-going basis.

The use of immediate release, short acting opioids is not recommended or supported in local or national guidance for managing non-palliative chronic pain. [Chronic non cancer pain guidelines](#)

To support Care Homes, Hospices and to help ensure that supplies of morphine sulphate oral solution are available to those who need it at the End of Life, all recurrent prescriptions for morphine sulphate oral solution for non-palliative chronic pain indications should be **urgently reviewed**.

Where possible non-palliative patients prescribed morphine sulphate oral solution should be weaned off this product. The total daily dose must be confirmed with the patient prior to initiating a dose reduction.

Dose reduction should occur in line with the local opiate reduction guidance which recommends a reduction of 10% every 1-2 weeks. [Available here](#)

Once the lowest clinically indicated opioid dose has been achieved, the total daily opiate dose should be prescribed as a twice daily modified release morphine tablet/capsule.

In order to release the pressure on supplies of medicines used in palliative care the Medicines Management Team will support practices to undertake reviews of patients prescribed morphine sulphate oral solution.

**For further information, please contact the Medicines Management Teams on
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