

Palliative Care Access to core Medicines (PCAM) Project – Pharmacies

Dear colleague,

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) would like to thank you for considering involvement with the Palliative Care Access to core Medicines (PCAM) Project.

If you choose to be involved, your pharmacy name, contact details and address will be published on a list of community pharmacies committed to stocking specific end-of-life medicines. The list will appear on consumer-facing and health care provider portals such the project landing page on the PSA's website, NWMPHN's website and HealthPathways Melbourne. This will enable general practitioners, palliative care nurses and other health care professionals to refer palliative patients and their carers to community pharmacies who have committed to stocking the medicines on NWMPHN's recommended core medicines list (CML).

Attached, you will find an outline of the PCAM Project and a non-legally binding letter of intent to stock core palliative care medicines in your pharmacy. If you agree to stock these medicines, please complete an online version of the letter of intent by clicking [here](#). Alternatively, the letter of intent can be completed and returned to the project team via email (details listed below) at your earliest convenience.

Please do not hesitate to contact the PCAM Project team if you have any further questions. We look forward to your participation in this important initiative.

Kind regards,

Adeline Tan

Project Manager (PCAM Project)
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Pharmaceutical Society of Australia

We acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Letter of Intent for the provision of the Palliative Care Access to core Medicines (PCAM) Project – Pharmacies

Background

Most people say that, if they had a terminal illness, they would prefer to be cared for at home and to die there if possible.¹ The Palliative Care Access to core Medicines (PCAM) project funded by North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) aims to support palliative care in the community and assist people who wish to die at home through timely access to essential medicines. This minimises suffering associated with emergent end-of-life symptoms.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), the peak national organisation for pharmacists working in all sectors, has been commissioned by NWMPHN to coordinate this project. We invite all community pharmacies within NWMPHN's [region](#) to participate in this initiative.

The PCAM Project has established a Core Medicines List (CML) through consultation with local palliative care providers, including local GPs and pharmacists, working in NWMPHN's region. The CML (Table 1) addresses the main symptoms commonly seen during terminal phase (pain, delirium, nausea, dyspnoea, and noisy breathing). The CML also takes in to account affordability and accessibility, by considering the need for parenteral administration and availability through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Table 1: Core Medicines List for Community Patients in NWMPHN's region

Medicine Category	First Line Medicines	Minimum Quantity to stock	Indication/(s) for use in terminal phase patients
Anxiolytic	Clonazepam 2.5mg/mL (0.1mg/drop) Oral Liquid	10mL bottle	Agitation associated with delirium Anxiety associated with dyspnoea
	Midazolam 5mg/mL Injection (If an injection is required or preferred)	5 or 10 ampoules	
Antipsychotic	Haloperidol 5mg/mL Injection	10 ampoules	Agitation Nausea, vomiting
Anticholinergic	Hyoscine butylbromide 20mg/mL Injection	5 ampoules	Respiratory tract secretions Noisy breathing
Antiemetic	Metoclopramide 10mg/2mL Injection	10 ampoules	Nausea, vomiting
Analgesic (High potency opioid)	Morphine (sulfate or hydrochloride) 10mg/mL and/or 30mg/mL Injection	5 ampoules	Dyspnoea Pain

¹ Palliative Care Australia. *Supporting palliative care patients who choose to die at home*. Available from: <https://palliativecare.org.au/palliative-matters/supporting-palliative-care-patients-who-choose-to-die-at-home> [Accessed 6 November 2020]

Community pharmacies are encouraged to stock the medicines in the CML. However, they may substitute these medicines dependent upon local prescribing preferences and/or stock availability. We encourage you to speak with local prescribers regarding their preferences.

This list does not restrict which medicines can be prescribed for individual palliative patients. It is one approach which will enable community pharmacies to anticipate medicines most likely to be prescribed and allow prescribers to anticipate medicines most likely to be available for timely supply in community pharmacies within NWMPHN's region.

The stocking of medicines from the list, together with improved collaboration between health care providers, can facilitate timely prescription, dispensing and, ultimately, administration of medicines for end-of-life symptom management.

The PSA will be contacting general practices and community pharmacies to create awareness about this project and the CML. Additionally, two webinars for GPs and pharmacists around end-of-life care and medication related issues will be delivered as part of this project.

- **Medicines in the last days of life: anticipatory medicines and medication management for end-of-life care** - 19 August 2021 (7.00pm – 8.30pm)
- **Supporting palliative care patients in residential aged care: for GPs and pharmacists** – 14 September 2021 (7.00pm – 8.30pm)

Alternatively, you may access recordings of these webinars on the [PSA website](#).

Aims of the PCAM Project

1. Establish a Core Medicine List (CML) based on best evidence for treating terminal phase symptoms, established CML in other settings, and preferences of local palliative care providers for the needs of their patients
2. Increase awareness and use of the CML by prescribers
3. Increase the number of community pharmacies stocking all medicines in the CML
4. Increase awareness of anticipatory prescribing
5. Increase collaboration between general practitioners and community pharmacists with regards to end-of-life care
6. Improve timely access to palliative care medicines for patients

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Responsibilities

PSA is responsible for the overall delivery of the project and will:

- Develop and deliver education webinars targeted towards pharmacists, general practitioners (GPs) and residential aged care facility staff
- Contact general practices in NWMPHN's region to create awareness about anticipatory prescribing and the role of the CML
- Contact community pharmacies in NWMPHN's region about the CML, and encourage pharmacists to stock the CML
- Develop and maintain an online hub of palliative care resources relevant to pharmacists and prescribers
- Develop an online mapping resource that shows the locations of pharmacies that have agreed to stock the CML within NWMPHN's region

Community Pharmacy's Responsibilities

To enable the PCAM Project to achieve its intended outcomes, community pharmacies will be expected to:

- Discuss with local prescribers including GPs, nurse practitioners and palliative care networks, which medicines from the CML will be stocked
- Commit to stocking at least one medicine from each of the five medicine categories included in the CML
- Conduct regular stock audits of core palliative care medicines including expiry date checks
- Maintain minimum stock levels of core palliative care medicines

Legal Effect

- This letter of intent is not a legally-binding document.

Funding and Financial Risk

- Pharmacies will need to commit to stocking the CML for patients in NWMPHN's region. Financial risk to pharmacies is likely to be mitigated through promotion of consistent prescribing of medicines on the core list and supporting more patients to be cared for and die at home.

Palliative Care Access to core Medicines (PCAM) Project – Letter of Intent

You can complete the Letter of Intent online by clicking on the weblink below/copying the weblink into your web browser, or by filling out this form and returning it via email.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PRM77TC>

Community Pharmacy's details

Primary Contact Name and Position	
Pharmacy Name	
Pharmacy Street Address	
Pharmacy Suburb, State, Postcode	
Pharmacy Contact Number	
Pharmacy Fax Number	
Email Address	
Hours of Operation	

Optional (tick if agree)

- Commit to keeping a regular supply of at least one medicine from each of the five medicine categories on the CML
- Agree to having the pharmacy's contact details and hours of operation listed on HealthPathways Melbourne's Palliative Care Pathway to indicate commitment to stocking these medicines

By signing this letter of intent, the parties confirm that the information contained within this letter of intent is complete and correct.

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia

Name

Position

Signature

Date

Community Pharmacy

Name of authorised representative

Position of authorised representative

Signature

Date

Once complete, please return via email to:

Email: adeline.tan@psa.org.au