

GP/district nurse contact number:

## Out of hours contacts (8pm-8am):

Dorset district nurses: **0300 369 0530**

Hampshire district nurses out of hours: Ring **111**

## 24-hour specialist palliative care advice

Forest Holme Hospice on: **0300 019 8115**  
(Poole, Wimborne, East Purbeck)

The Macmillan Unit on: **0300 019 5470**  
(Bournemouth, Christchurch, and South Hampshire)

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS are here to help if you have any queries or concerns about care at the University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust.

UHD PALS: **0300 019 8499**

PALS are available Monday to Friday from 9.30 to 4pm.

If you call out-of-hours, please leave a message and a member of the PALS team will return your call as soon as possible.




The Royal Bournemouth Hospital,  
Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

Poole Hospital,  
Longfleet Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2JB

Christchurch Hospital,  
Fairmile Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2JX

Author: **Elizabeth Reynolds** Date: **November 2023** Version: **One**  
Review date: **November 2026** Ref: **142/23**

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# Syringe Driver



## Information for patients, family, and friends

Royal Bournemouth Hospital: **01202 303626**

Poole Hospital: **01202 665511**

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## What is a syringe driver?

A syringe driver (sometimes called a syringe pump) is a small battery powered driver. It delivers medication through a thin tube and a small needleless catheter. This sits just under the surface of the skin.

## Why do I need a syringe driver?

You may need a syringe driver if:

- you find it hard to take medication
- you are unable to take medicines by mouth
- medicines taken by mouth are not being absorbed properly as it reduces the need for repeated injections.

## How does the syringe driver work?

The syringe driver has a battery driven motor which very slowly pushes the syringe plunger to administer the medication. You should not feel this as only a tiny amount of fluid is delivered each time the plunger moves.

A green flashing light on the front of the syringe driver lets you know the driver is working. Nurses will refill the syringe driver each day. They will use the medications which have been prescribed by your doctor and agreed with you. The machine can be put into a small bag and placed over your shoulder, or around your waist, so that you can move around while you have the driver in place.

## Where does the needleless catheter go?

The needleless catheter/cannula goes into the upper arms, thighs, upper chest, or tummy. Sometimes it can be placed into your back. It is held in place by a clear dressing which keeps it clean and dry. It also allows nurses to check the site without removing the dressing. The needleless catheter is designed to be left in place for a number of days. Once in place it should be painless. If you do experience any pain or discomfort, let your nurse know.

## Are there any special instructions for me to be aware of?

As with any device, dressing, or tubing, always check for signs of pressure damage. Be aware of where lines, tubing, and devices are lying and if there are areas where skin contact is made.

Regularly check and seek advice if you are concerned or notice marks on the skin. Do not get the syringe driver wet as water and steam can damage the working parts of the driver. Please talk to the nurse if this happens.

## How do I know the syringe driver is working fine?

Before setting up the syringe driver, the nurse will check it to see if it is working. When running a small light above the 'ON/OFF' button will flash green. If it turns red, there is a problem and you should contact the nurse straight away.

## What to do if the alarm sounds?

Do not worry if the syringe driver beeps or an alarm sounds. The alarm will sound 15 minutes before the end of the medication. The green flashing light will turn yellow and beep three times every 15 seconds. If the infusion finishes, the light will turn red. There will be a continuous alarm. The nurse will normally visit to check before this time. If the driver does alarm, please contact the district nurse/out of hours services.

## Why do I need a syringe driver?

- If walking around, you can carry the syringe driver in a small bag or pouch.
- If in bed or a chair, the syringe driver can be put on a flat surface next to you
- A nurse will advise on what to do if you want a bath or shower.

## Please DO NOT:

- interfere with the line or driver
- press the buttons on the driver control panel
- get the syringe driver wet
- drop the syringe driver
- leave the syringe driver in a hot area or bright sunlight.

## Please contact a nurse if any of the following happen:

- The driver alarms or you have any other worries
- You are worried the driver is damaged or not working
- The colour of the medicines has changed or is cloudy
- The skin around the site is red, swollen, or painful
- The tubing falls out or becomes disconnected.