

SA Palliative Care Community Pharmacy Update

A joint initiative of South Australian Palliative Care Services

The [previous update \(204kb pdf\)](#) discussed changing circumstances at home. Carers may need stronger supports in the home to help in managing medicines.

Community Nursing

Upon visiting Rina and Alek, the palliative care pharmacist recognised that Alek was experiencing significant stress with his new responsibilities. With the support of his son, Alek is supporting his deteriorating wife. This includes the administration of subcutaneous medicines. While carers can be trained to do this task, for some carers this will be challenging.

As such, a referral was made, through their current community nursing provider, to increase the current allocation of community nursing from daily to twice a day. In Adelaide, if additional direct nursing support is required, this is organised through a Metropolitan Referral Unit (MRU) request.

Metropolitan Referral Unit

The MRU provides a centralised single point of contact for referral to a range of services to support hospital avoidance and discharge support services for SA Health public hospitals. The team of clinicians in the MRU review and assess referrals to link individuals to the most appropriate service model and response to avoid hospital admission or support an early return home from SA Public Hospitals. This service is available for people receiving care in their own home or residential aged care. Short term clinical services include:

- > Wound Management
- > Medication Management
- > Continence Management
- > End of Life Care (EoLC)
- > Allied Health

- > Post Procedural Accommodation/Transport
- > Equipment (to support hospital avoidance and discharge)
- > Interpreting Services
- > Personal care – showering etc.

Consumers are unable to self-refer. Referrals must be made by a health care professional within the Adelaide metropolitan area and can be hospital or community based, including:

- > the person's general practitioner (or a practice nurse)
- > A metropolitan palliative care service, if the person is known to them
- > The medical team can refer the person for home based short term nursing services at discharge.

A referral form and other information related to specific service that may be needed to access are found [here](#). Once received, the referrer will be contacted to confirm a service, for eligible patients, within an hour.

Nursing care will be delivered by one of four non-Government organisations including: Calvary Community Care, Home Support Services, Pop-Up Community Care and Royal District Nursing Service.

For more information

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This update is intended to provide practical up to date and factual information relating to pharmacy and medicines management in the setting of Palliative Care and is based on critical review of available evidence. Individual patient circumstances must be considered when applying this information. Please feel free to distribute this update further to interested colleagues.

