**ANTICIPATORY or ‘JUST in CASE’ MEDICINES**

**An information sheet for patients and those caring for them**

**What are ‘anticipatory’ medicines?**

These are a small supply of injections for you to keep at home just in case you need them. The medicines will come with a paper form called a MAAR chart that allow your doctor or nurse to give them to you if injections are needed to help with your symptoms.

**Who will give these medicines?**

They are usually given by your doctor or nurse although in a few cases, we can train a family member how to give injections.

**What are the benefits of having a supply of anticipatory medicines?**

You may not need any of these medicines right now, but they have been supplied to you because your doctor or nurse think they may be needed in the future. They might be needed if swallowing becomes a problem, or if sickness makes it difficult to take medicines by mouth. They can also be helpful right at the end of life

It is often difficult to get these medicines when you need them, especially at night or at weekends so it is helpful to have them ready at home just in case.

These injections include medication for:

❖ pain

❖ nausea or sickness

❖ anxiety or restlessness

❖ breathlessness or excess secretions in the chest

The medicines that you are given will be tailored to your needs and will depend on your condition. You may never need any of the medications but it is useful to have them available.

**How do I store these medicines?**

* Store in the original boxes and at room temperature
* Store in a safe, secure place, out of the sight and reach of children
* Do tell at least one close family member or friend where these medicines are stored so they can be found if needed
* Do not share your medicines with anyone else, they have been prescribed only for you
* Take care of the paper forms (the MAAR chart) that come with these medicines as your nurse or doctor will need this information to give the medicines to you

**Are there any side effects with these medicines?**

All medicines have side effects, but they will only be used in the lowest doses to help, and only if there is benefit. None of the medicines will make you worse or hasten death.

**What if I need more medicines?**

Your nurse will arrange for a prescription from your doctor for more supplies. It is best to do this before supplies run out. Someone will need to collect the medication or the community pharmacy may be able to deliver to you at home.

If you are admitted to hospital or hospice, the medicines can go with you as it is useful for the doctors to know what has been prescribed for you.

**What happens to these medicines if they are no longer needed?**

They should to be returned to a pharmacy. It does not have to be the same pharmacy that the medicines were from originally. The nurses are unable to return medication.