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Northern Health Palliative Care

A Symptom Management Kit Resources Guide

A Symptom Management Kit (SMK) is a locked box of a 72 hr supply of select palliative care medications and supplies, available for distribution in certain communities within Northern Health. An SMK can help support symptom management and end of life in the home setting when utilized appropriately.

Key points	
SMKs are available through specific pharmacies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The location of the pharmacies that are contracted to provide SMKs can be found here. Only these pharmacies are able to provide Northern Health with SMKs.
In order to utilize an SMK in an individual's home, certain paperwork is necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palliative Care Benefits MUST be in place. If not, the cost of the kit will fall to the family and is very expensive. Pharmacists can confirm whether benefits are active if you are unsure if the patient has been registered. Symptom Management Prescription order form must be completed by the prescriber and sent to a pharmacy. NOTE: none of the kit contents may be altered. You must choose all the kit contents in their specified amount when ordering, modified prescription forms will not be accepted. Pharmacy also requires the prescriber to submit duplicate prescriptions for all the narcotics in the SMK (morphine AND hydromorphone) The NH Palliative Care order sets (NH Adult Palliative Care Orders: Community as well as the NH Adult Palliative Care Crisis Event Orders: Community) must also be completed by the prescriber and sent to the Community Nursing Team, to provide nurses with orders on how the kit contents should be administered. SMKs cannot be dispensed to families who do not have Community Nursing support in place.
What if my community does not have an SMK?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instead of ordering an SMK, a prescriber can order all relevant medications that are found in the SMK by using the NH Palliative Care orders sets as the prescription as well as the orders for the Community Nursing Team. In this case however medications will not be dispensed in a locked box as when an SMK is ordered.
Other resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contents of the SMKs can be viewed in the Content List. Clinical Practice Standard for SMK SMK Learning Hub module for physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and community pharmacists

Reference: *Community Palliative Care Symptom Management Kit* (pp. 1-8). (2020). Regional Palliative Care Pharmacist Lead Northern Health