

## What is the 'Just in Case' box?

The 'Just in Case' box contains medicines that are given by injection to treat certain symptoms that might develop. They are kept in the home 'just in case' they are needed.

Sometimes it can take time for a doctor to prescribe medicines or for your pharmacy to order them. By having the medicines already in your home, it means you don't need to worry about trying to get them if they are needed.

The medicines for the box are ordered in the normal way through your GP and community pharmacy. The district nurse will then put them in the box when they visit.

## What are the Medicines for?

Your doctor and district nurse will decide which medicines might be needed for the 'Just in Case' box. You may not need the medicines right now, however they have been prescribed as they may be needed in the future. This is known as 'anticipatory prescribing'.

The medicines that may be included can be used to treat:

• Pain

• Nausea (sickness) or vomiting

• Agitation or restlessness

• Noisy breathing or shortness of breath

## Who can Give the Medicines?

The medicines in the box are all injections and they can only be given by a nurse or doctor. They will assess which, if any of the medicines are needed. If any medicines are used, the District Nurse will check/count control drugs routinely.

Your district nurse and doctor will continue to assess you and make sure any medicines are still right for you. The doses or medicines in the 'Just in Case' box may change over time.

If you are phoning your GP Practice or the Out of Hours service for someone who is in any distress, for example in pain or discomfort, it is very important that the receptionist understands

**(A) if the person is on their GP palliative, supportive care register and**

**(B) what is the level of distress or discomfort,**

**(C) if there are 'Just in Case' medicines in the home.**

As the volume of calls is very high, this information helps the team respond more quickly to those in greater need.

## How to Look After the 'Just in Case' box

The box should be stored in a safe, dry place out of reach of children. Keep it at or below 25°C (usual room temperature). Never give them to anyone else, as they may cause harm to someone they are not intended for.

If the 'Just in Case' box is not needed any longer, the medicines should be returned to your community pharmacy. The District Nurse/Doctor will advise this return as the control drug stock chart will need to be counted and signed by family.

## What if any Other Medicines are Needed?

Your doctor or district nurse will advise if any more medicines are needed. If this happens take the prescription to your community pharmacy in the normal way. Your pharmacy may need to order the medication for you. Let them know if any medicines are needed urgently.

## Who to Contact if you Have any Further Questions

If you have any questions about the 'Just in Case' box you can ask your district nurse or doctor. Your community pharmacy can also advise on any medicines you are taking.

### Contacts

#### District Nurse

#### GP

#### Community Pharmacy

#### Out of Hours

#### Other

# Anticipatory Prescribing & Just in Case Boxes

A Guide for Patients and Carers

