

Record of medication provided by your healthcare professional:

Medication	Dose (Amount)	Frequency (How often)	Started / changed on	Name & designation of healthcare professional

# Patient Guidance

## Medication and driving

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of the Princess Alice Hospice team on **01372 461804**.



Princess Alice Hospice, West End Lane, Esher, KT10 8NA

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# In March 2015, the Department of Transport brought in new rules for any person taking certain medications ('controlled drugs') and driving.

## What prescribed medications are included?

- 'Opioid' painkillers: e.g. Morphine, Oxycodone, Fentanyl, Methadone
- 'Benzodiazepines': e.g. Diazepam, Lorazepam, Clonazepam, Temazepam, Ketamine
- Amphetamines (methylphenidate).

## What are the rules?

Police have new powers to test and prosecute drivers who are suspected of having certain medications in their body over a set limit.

This also applies to people who are attempting to drive or are in charge of a vehicle.

It will be classed as an offence to have amounts of these medications above a certain level in the body. If a roadside (saliva) test shows a person has taken one of the medications listed above, they can be requested to provide a blood sample to see if the levels of medication are above the set limit. If found to be above the limit, they may be prosecuted.

However, the new offence has a 'medical defence' to protect patients who are taking medications that have been prescribed for them. Police will not prosecute a patient who tests positive for these medications so long as:

- Their driving is not impaired **and**
- They can provide evidence that they are taking medication as directed by a healthcare professional **or** they are taking medication in accordance with the patient information leaflet accompanying the medicine.

For example, if you are taking morphine for pain the police will not prosecute you if:

- Your driving is not impaired and
- You can provide evidence that you are taking the morphine as directed by your doctor.

## What is our advice?

- Keep taking your medication as advised by your healthcare professional (GP, Hospice Doctor and Hospice Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)).
- Check the leaflet that comes with your medication for information on how it might affect your driving ability.
- It is already (and remains) an offence to drive whilst impaired through drugs (either through medical or non-medical drug use).
- It is **YOUR** responsibility to consider if your driving is, or might be, impaired on any given occasion.

## Do NOT drive if:

- You feel that your driving is actually impaired e.g. if you experience sleepiness, dizziness, poor coordination, visual problems, slowed/impaired thinking or confusion.
- This is most likely when:
  - you have just started taking a medication listed above
  - the dose of that medication has recently changed
  - you are taking more of the medication for breakthrough pain or anxiety
  - you take any amount of alcohol (however small) in addition to these medications
  - a new medicine has been prescribed which may also impair your driving (discuss with your doctor)

## If you feel that you are safe to drive:

- Keep taking your medications as prescribed.
- You must take with you evidence that the medication was **either**
  - prescribed/supplied by a healthcare professional to treat a medical problem **OR**
  - taken in accordance with the leaflet accompanying the medicine (if bought over-the-counter)
- Suitable evidence could include:
  - a copy of the prescription for the medication
  - A copy of the specific advice given to you by your doctor/CNS showing what the medication is, how much you take (dose) and how often
  - the patient information leaflet that came with the medicine (if bought 'over the counter').

