Alternatives to common palliative care drugs: Strong Opioids

Standard treatment options for management palliative care symptoms may be more limited in the current climate. The following guidance provides first line management alongside alternative medications and routes of administration for patients with palliative care needs.

**Strong opioids**

- **Oral Morphine Sulphate MR**
  - Switch to alternative preparation of same drug available at equivalent dose (e.g. MST granules) as per BNF
  - Still unavailable
  - **Switch to equivalent dose oral oxycodone MR** *

- **Oral Oxycodone MR**
  - Switch to alternative preparation of same drug available at equivalent dose (e.g. brand switch) as per BNF
  - Still unavailable
  - **If eGFR <40** switch to equivalent dose buprenorphine or fentanyl patch*
  - **If eGFR >40** switch to equivalent dose oral morphine sulphate MR *

- **Fentanyl patch**
  - **Is absorption of oral meds an issue?**
    - Yes
      - **Switch to equivalent dose buprenorphine patch or syringe driver opioid** *
    - **No**
      - **If eGFR >40** switch to equivalent dose oral morphine sulphate MR *
      - **If eGFR <40** switch to equivalent dose oral oxycodone MR *

- **Buprenorphine patch**
  - **Is absorption of oral meds an issue?**
    - Yes
      - Switch to equivalent dose fentanyl patch or syringe driver opioid*
    - **No**

*please see MD161 Opioid conversion table in toolkit