

## COVID-19 TIP SHEET FOR PALLIATIVE CARE

### 01-OPCN- EOL Symptom Management for COVID-19- 2020-04-16

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#### Preamble

The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation. This document is intended to provide guidance specific to **End of Life Symptom Management** during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is not intended to replace or supersede guidance or policies developed in other settings or institutions or by specific programs. Adapted approaches may be required to address unique, organizational or other circumstances and conditions. Further updates may be released as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and clinical evidence develops.

#### Issue Summary

The clinical management of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly evolving. Patients with COVID-19 have unique needs at the end of life, and this document summarizes best practice for addressing these needs.

#### Background

The OPCN previously distributed a British Columbia guide to symptom management for EOL care for patients with COVID-19 illness. This document has been recreated by a number of programs and institutions.

#### Approach

A number of End-of Life symptom management guides were reviewed to inform development of this document. Content from the South East, Baycrest and North York General documents were synthesized to create an Ontario version of the British Columbia guide to symptom management for EOL care. This guidance document also identifies issues specific to oxygen therapy in the setting of COVID-19.

#### Recommendations

In the current context, there are risks of drug shortages in community settings. It is important to be aware of the alternative approaches for specific symptoms. Other medications that can be considered in addition to those listed in this document include:

##### Agitation/delirium:

Olanzapine	2.5 – 10 mg sublingual or subcut q12h
Quetiapine	25 – 50 mg po q8h prn
Risperidone	0.5 – 1 mg po q12h prn

##### Upper Airway Secretions:

Hyoscine Butylbromide (Buscopan®)	10 mg subcut q4h prn
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##### Sedation:

Loxapine	5 - 10 mg subcut q4h prn*
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\*please refer to companion document on Continuous Palliative Sedation Therapy

#### Additional Resources

Please refer to McMaster's "Continuous Palliative Sedation Therapy (CPST) Protocol for Covid-19 Pandemic", that is being distributed along with this guidance document, and is also available here:

<https://fhs.mcmaster.ca/palliativecare/documents/McMasterPalliativeSedationProtocolCOVID31March2020.pdf>