

# Syringe driver checks

What care staff should look out for, and when to call the nurse

Only registered nurses, or staff trained and assessed as competent under local policy, should set up, refill, stop, restart or adjust a syringe driver. Care staff can check and report.

| Service / area | Completed by | Date  |
|----------------|--------------|-------|
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## The pump

- ☐ The light is flashing to show the pump is running.
- ☐ No alarm is sounding and no warning message is showing on the screen.
- ☐ The pump is in its bag or lockbox, and isn't in direct sunlight or near a heat source.
- ☐ The pump hasn't been dropped or got wet.

## The line and the syringe

- ☐ The line isn't kinked, clamped, pulled or disconnected.
- ☐ There is no leaking from the syringe, line or connections.
- ☐ The medicine in the syringe and line looks clear, not cloudy, discoloured or with bits in it.

## The site and the person

- ☐ No redness, swelling, bleeding, leaking or soreness where the needle or cannula goes into the skin.
- ☐ The person seems comfortable: note any new or worsening pain, sickness, agitation or breathlessness.

## If you notice a problem

1. **Tell the nurse in charge or community nursing team straight away** (contact details in the care plan).
2. **Stay with the person** and reassure them.
3. **Don't stop, restart, adjust or remove** the pump, line or syringe unless it's your trained role.
4. **Record** what you noticed and who you told.

If the person dies, don't remove the syringe driver or line. Tell the nurse or your manager. If the death is unexpected, leave all equipment in place.

**Sources** (checked 13 October 2026): Scottish Palliative Care Guidelines: Syringe pump/driver guidelines (2023): before setting up an infusion; monitoring and maintaining the infusion; alarms and troubleshooting; safety and risk management.

A quick-reference resource only. Always follow the person's care plan, your organisation's policies and procedures, and current national guidance.

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