About the Management of Constipation in Adult Patients Receiving Palliative Care

Constipation is one of the most common symptoms experienced by patients with advanced progressive illness. It can also occur as a side-effect of pain medication so this NCEC National Clinical Guideline complements National Clinical Guideline No 9, which deals with cancer pain. Constipation requires treatment, sometimes with laxatives. Prevention and treatment positively impact on a patient’s quality of life and the guideline recommendations also indicate where specialist advice should be sought. This clinical guideline is for use by multidisciplinary teams from a variety of settings such as primary care and community, hospices and hospitals.

This NCEC National Clinical Guideline No 10 was developed by the National Clinical Programme for Palliative Care to improve the standard and consistency of clinical practice in line with the best and most recent scientific evidence available. An information leaflet has also been developed to inform patients.

Launch of the Palliative Care guidelines on constipation, Nov 2015.
(Minister Lynch, Minister of State at Department of Health; with Dr Kathleen MacLellan, Director of Patient Safety and Clinical Effectiveness, Department of Health; Dr Karen Ryan, Clinical Lead, National Clinical Programme for Palliative Care; Dr Brenda O’Connor, Chair, and Dr Jodie Battley of the Guideline Development Group.)