

# MEDIA RELEASE



**Palliative  
Care  
Australia**

## Palliative Care Australia

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## **New program to assist syringe driver replacement for community-based services**

A new program to assist community-based palliative care services replace syringe drivers will commence this month.

Syringe drivers are a means of providing pain and symptom control via the subcutaneous infusion of medicines when other routes of administration are inappropriate or no longer effective.

Since their introduction in the mid 1970s, syringe drivers have played a key role in enabling ambulatory and home-based care outside the hospital environment, thereby increasing the options for improved quality of life and home-based care for patients receiving palliative care.

In 2007 when changes to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) medical device registration process became applicable, the suppliers of the predominant subcutaneous infusion devices used in Australia, the Graseby MS16a and MS26 syringe drivers, announced their voluntary withdrawal from the Australian market.

'Palliative Care Australia took an active interest in this area from the outset. We commissioned a report to assist services compare how well alternative devices met the specific needs of patients receiving palliative care', said Donna Daniell, Chief Executive Officer of Palliative Care Australia.

'We are pleased that the Australian Government has recognised the impact that the withdrawal of Graseby syringe drivers has had, particularly in rural and remote areas.'

Palliative Care Australia has been appointed to manage the \$2.38m Syringe Driver Replacement Program.

The program is aimed primarily at community-based palliative care services in rural, regional and remote areas, and will assist services to replace their existing Graseby devices. Eligible services will be contacted directly in August by PCA and provided with details of the application process.

Palliative Care Australia is in discussion with suppliers to ensure they are able to provide appropriate education and training to support the safe and effective use of the syringe drivers provided under this program.

For further information about the Syringe Driver Replacement Program contact Robin Vote on 02 6163 8415 or see [www.palliativecare.org.au](http://www.palliativecare.org.au).

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*PCA is the peak national organisation representing the interests and aspirations of all who share the ideal of quality care at the end of life*

Patron: Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia