A Symptom Response Kit (SRK) provides medications and supplies in the home of a palliative care patient for anticipatory planning for a potential symptom crisis, optimizing the chances of keeping the patient in the home and preventing emergency room visits.

When do I obtain a SRK?
- When the patient’s Palliative Performance Scale is $\leq 50$
- At the discretion of the physician (e.g. related to known rapidity of disease trajectory or remote geographical location of the patient)

How do I arrange for a kit to go into a home?
- The nurse and physician will assess the patient’s home for any risks storing injectable opioids
- Prescription/Order Forms are available from any South East CCAC office or on the South East CCAC website [http://healthcareathome.ca/southeast/en/Partners/forms](http://healthcareathome.ca/southeast/en/Partners/forms)
- The nurse and physician will review the Prescription/Order Form to determine what medications might be needed for this person in the event of a crisis
- The physician will complete and sign the Prescription/Order Form and send it to the CCAC Care Coordinator (CC) responsible for this patient
- The CC will fax the Prescription/Order Form to Ontario Medical Supply (OMS)
- OMS will prepare a SRK containing the prescribed medications, supplies for parenteral administration and foley catheters with insertion tray and drainage bag
- OMS will deliver the SRK to the patient’s home
- A copy of the Prescription/Order Form will be placed in the patient’s chart in the home

Is there a charge to the patient for the SRK contents?
- Most medications will be covered through Ontario Drug Benefit or private insurance
- The patient will be asked to pay for medications that are not covered - OMS will contact the patient to arrange a method of payment, if needed.
- All supplies will be covered through the CCAC program.

Where and how is the SRK stored in the home?
- The SRK will be delivered in a sealed, OMS cardboard box
- Yellow labels on each side of the box will help identify the SRK
- The SRK will be stored in a place in the patient’s home away from the patient’s usual medications and supplies
  - the Yellow Folders will contain a small yellow SRK label, which will be placed on the outside of the patient’s chart to indicate that a SRK is in the home
  - note the location of the SRK on the Prescription/Order Form in the chart
Nursing Process Summary - Palliative Care Symptom Response Kits

What is the procedure at the time of a crisis?
- The nurse will make a bedside assessment
- If the physician previously indicated a preference for the nurse to contact the physician prior to administering SRK medications, the nurse will contact the physician or designate
- Otherwise, if there are up-to-date orders, the nurse will open the SRK and administer medications or perform a catheterization
- If the orders are not up-to-date or if the nurse has a concern about proceeding, the nurse will contact the patient’s physician or designate for advice.
- Afterwards, if the physician has not already been contacted, the nurse will notify the physician of the crisis and together they will plan the ongoing care of the patient

What do I do with the SRK now that it is opened?
- Following a crisis, the physician and nurse will determine whether to replace the medications and supplies used, depending on the patient’s ongoing care
- Remaining, unused SRK medications and supplies may be required at a later date
- The SRK will not be replaced, unless the nurse and physician believe it is necessary

How is the SRK monitored and updated?
- The nurse will check the SRK monthly
  - Each agency will determine the most effective prompt for this check
- A label on the outside of the SRK indicates the earliest expiry date of all medications
- Each month, the nurse checks:
  - SRK storage location
  - Expiry date
  - Kit integrity
  - Appropriateness of medications and concentrations
  - Appropriateness of medication orders
- The nurse will record the date of the check and the nurse’s name on the large yellow label on one side of the SRK’s exterior
- If the expiry date is reached prior to using the SRK, a whole new kit will be ordered
- If medications need to be changed or added, a whole new kit will be ordered
- If a whole new kit needed, a new Prescription/Order Form will be completed, as described above (How do I arrange for a kit to go into a home?)

What is the process for disposal of the SRK?
- The Symptom Response Kit is to be opened at time of patient’s death or discharge to hospital/Palliative Care Unit and all medication disposed of in the sharp’s container for pick up by OMS
- Remainder of kit and supplies to be left with patient’s family to dispose of as per usual process