



# **John Taylor Hospice**

## **Prescribing Algorithm**

### **Excessive Respiratory Secretions in the Dying Phase**

**Version 4**

# Contents Page

<b>1. Scope .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Key points for consideration .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Prescribing Algorithm for Excessive Respiratory Secretions in the DYING PHASE .....</b>	<b>4</b>

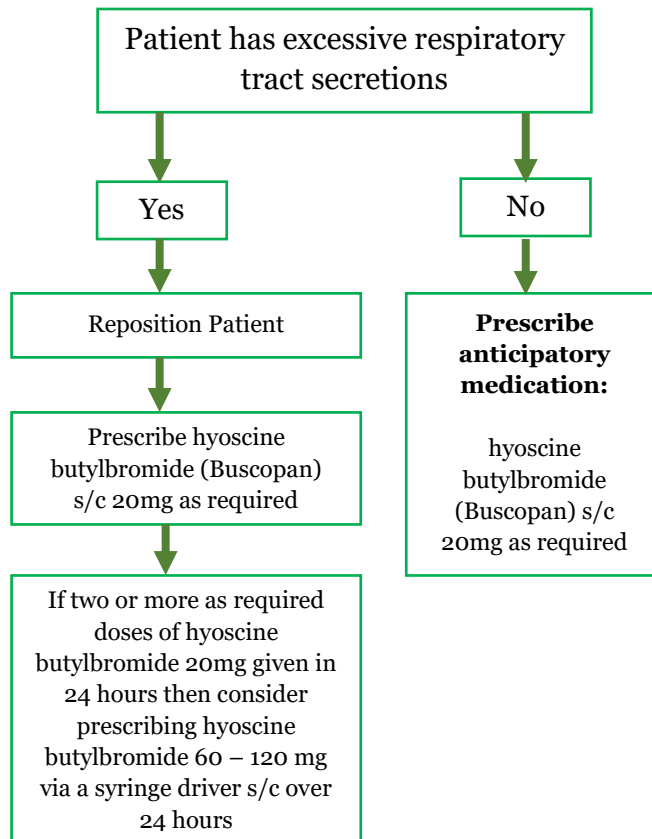
## 1. Scope

This is for use by professionals in all healthcare settings caring for patients with excessive respiratory secretions in the in the dying phase.

## 2. Key points for consideration

- Secretions are often more distressing to the family and carers than to the patient themselves. If the patient is not distressed careful explanation of this may avoid the need for drugs.
- It should be remembered that drug treatment does not reduce the quantity, or cause re-absorption of secretions already produced. It will only reduce the production of further secretions. Furthermore, drying up secretions will cause a dry mouth which some patients may find uncomfortable.
- If patients are not settling / comfortable after the given time period then further help can be sought from West Midlands Palliative Care Physicians Guidance <http://wmpcg.co.uk/> or alternatively contact the out of hours doctor on call.

### 3. Prescribing Algorithm for Excessive Respiratory Secretions in the DYING PHASE



**s/c = subcutaneous**

Note: Alternative medication is available if hyoscine butylbromide (Buscopan) is not effective. Please use the West Midlands Palliative Care Physicians Guidelines <http://wmpcg.co.uk/> for the use of drugs in symptom control or contact your local specialist palliative care team for further advice.