

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS)

# Guidelines for Palliative Care Syringe Driver Program



## Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) - Guidelines for Palliative Care Syringe Driver Program

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An electronic version of this document is available at [health.qld.gov.au/mass](https://health.qld.gov.au/mass)

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# 1 Introduction

In 2019 the Queensland Department of Health introduced the Care in the Right Setting (CaRS) pilot program. The CaRS program is dedicated to funding models of care that support the provision of healthcare in the right setting and promote the appropriate and effective use of hospital services. One of the areas highlighted to receive funding is Palliative Care.

Under the program, Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) will administer and coordinate the Palliative Care Syringe Driver Program (MASS PCSDP).

This program provides access to a BD Bodyguard T syringe driver on a loan basis, for up to one month. It is available to eligible persons of all ages with a palliative condition and approaching, or in, the terminal palliative care phase.

## 1.1 Our Primary Aim and Objectives

The MASS PCSDP aims to support the provision of palliative care services within the home (or within residential aged care facilities if use of a syringe driver will avoid a hospital transfer) to improve access to healthcare and reduce the overall demand on hospitals by:

- Assisting to alleviate the financial and logistical challenges experienced when choosing to remain in the home.
- Providing timely access to a syringe driver to help with symptom management.
- Providing a coordinated and centralised hub with single point of contact.
- Providing effective, efficient and equitable delivery of services (including rural and remote regions).

## 1.2 Scope of Services

The purpose of the MASS PCSDP is to provide access to a syringe driver for symptom management to support persons approaching their end of life to remain at home where possible.

The MASS PCSDP is an expansion to the current scope of services provided by MASS. Where relevant, the [MASS General Guidelines](#) and MASS Standing Offer Arrangements will apply.

The MASS PCSDP will operate through a prescriber model where an application is submitted by an approved healthcare practitioner (medical/nursing) after consultation with the applicant, family and/or carers.

The PCSDP program will provide the following for approved applicants:

- BD Bodyguard T Syringe Driver – up to one month loan of the syringe driver. Extra time may be requested by contacting MASS.

The PCSDP program will not provide consumables packs (which will include subcutaneous cannula, extension set, syringes and batteries). **All consumables will be provided by the host area/responsible Hospital and Health Service (HHS).**

## 1.3 MASS Locations and Contact List

MASS PCSDP will be administered and coordinated by MASS.

### **MASS Specialised Services – Brisbane:**

- (07) 3136 3696
- [MASS-SpecialisedServices@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-SpecialisedServices@health.qld.gov.au)

## 2 Eligibility

Access to the MASS PCSDP is determined by both administrative and clinical criteria.

### 2.1 Administrative Eligibility Criteria

The applicant must:

- Be a permanent Queensland resident with a Queensland delivery address.
- Provide a Medicare Card number for purpose of unique identification.
- Provide a completed MASS PCSDP Palliative Confirmation Form signed by palliative care specialist or treating specialist/GP with palliative care specialist consultation.

### 2.2 Clinical Eligibility Criteria

- A life limiting condition with a likely prognosis of one month or less diagnosed by a Palliative Care Specialist or treating Specialist/GP/Nurse Practitioner/Registered Nurse with palliative care specialist consultation.
- Residing at, or returning to, home or residential aged care for end-of-life care.

## 3 Device Prescriber Role

MASS PCSDP operates through a prescriber model. This means that:

- There are designated MASS PCSDP prescribers for syringe drivers.
- Prescribers, in consultation with the applicant/carer, submit an application on behalf of the applicant.
- For MASS PCSDP approved prescribers, please see section 3.2.

### 3.1 Prescriber Responsibilities

The following outlines the roles and responsibilities of MASS PCSDP prescribers:

- Responsible for the accuracy of the application.

- Provide a service within scope of practice, ensuring appropriate clinical knowledge, skills and competency to assess the applicant, situation and environment when prescribing a syringe driver.
- Hold current registration with their relevant National Registration Board or equivalent.
- Understand the MASS PCSDP Guidelines and application process.
- Ensure the applicant/carer is fully involved in the application process.
- Ensure the applicant/carer is aware of the scope of the service provided by MASS, including:
  - Eligibility criteria.
  - Conditions of supply, including the one month timeframe and extension application criteria.
  - To contact MASS promptly if the syringe driver requires repair
  - To contact the host HHS location to organise collection of the equipment if it is no longer required.
- Ensure continuity of service, by arranging a new prescriber and completing handover, if unable to continue working with the applicant during the equipment loan period.
- Assist MASS with review and analysis of the program by completing the MASS PCSDP online feedback form.

## 3.2 Eligible Device Prescribers for MASS PCSDP

The approved list of eligible device prescribers for the MASS PCSDP is:

- Medical practitioners
- Nurse practitioners
- Registered Nurses

# 4 Equipment – MASS PCSDP

The MASS Specialised Services team administers MASS PCSDP applications for syringe drivers. Approved applicants will be loaned a syringe driver for up to a period of one month. An extension of the loan period, of one month at a time, can be requested by the prescriber if the applicant's diagnosis extends past the one month loan period.

## 4.1 Syringe Driver

Inclusions:

- 1 x Bodyguard T Syringe Driver
- 1 x Lock Box
- 1 x Carry Pouch

## 4.2 Device Prescriber Assessment and Application Process

The following outlines the activities and tasks required to be completed by the eligible prescriber, as part of the application process.

Activity	Required Tasks Summary
1. Review Eligibility Criteria	Eligible device prescriber: Determine if the applicant meets the eligibility criteria for assistance
2. Discuss with applicant/family	Eligible device prescriber: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss medication recommendations.</li> <li>• Clearly explain that the loan for the syringe driver is time-limited (one month).</li> <li>• Clearly explain that MASS is responsible for the loan of the syringe driver, and that use of the syringe driver in the applicant's home will be facilitated by an appropriately trained and certified clinician e.g., Registered Nurse or other suitably qualified Registered Health Care Professional.</li> <li>• Request the MASS PCSDP Palliative Confirmation Form be completed by the approved persons.</li> </ul>
3. Submit PCSDP Application	Eligible device prescriber: <p><b>PRIOR to application submission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the MASS PCSDP Palliative Confirmation Form has been completed by the approved persons.</li> </ul> <p><b>ON Submission:</b> Complete the PCSDP application via MASS-eApply, ensuring all required documentation is attached.</p> <p><b>MASS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the application.</li> <li>• Advise device prescriber of outcome.</li> <li>• Contact host HHS and arrange for HHS to deliver device</li> </ul>
4. Facilitate Hand Over/Training of Equipment	Eligible device prescriber: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once notification from MASS of successful application and delivery time frame, facilitate the training for use of the syringe driver with the applicant and/or carer/family.</li> <li>• If relevant, facilitate hand over of care of the applicant to the community Registered Health Professional and advise of the approved application for the loan of the MASS PCSDP syringe driver and required consumables packs.</li> </ul>

## 4.3 Equipment Loan Period

- Initial Loan Time Frame: One Month

- Request for Extension: A review by their Palliative Care Specialist or Treating Specialist/GP/Nurse Practitioner/Registered Nurse with Palliative Care Specialist consultation is mandatory if the Syringe Driver is required after one month.

## 4.4 MASS PCSDP – Time Extension Requests

Requests must be submitted to MASS at least 3days prior to the end of the loan period.

Activity	Required Tasks Summary
1. Prescriber Submits Request	<b>Eligible prescriber:</b> Contact MASS Specialised Services on (07) 3136 3696 to initiate extension request.
2. Prescriber discusses outcome with applicant/family	<b>MASS:</b> Assess extension request and advise of outcome. <b>Eligible device prescriber:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow up with family to notify outcome of request.</li> <li>• Follow up action dependent on request outcome.</li> </ul>

**Possible outcomes of extension review include:**

Possible Outcome	Details
Time Extension Approved	If the applicant is in the terminal phase, at MASS’s discretion, the loan/supply may be extended for one month, and then reviewed again.
Time Extension NOT Approved; Applicant Options	Privately hire or purchase item(s).

## 4.5 Application and Delivery Turn Around Time

Delivery timeframes for MASS PCSDP syringe driver and consumables from a treating area/Hospital and Health Service location may be affected by:

- Availability of equipment.
- Availability of an appropriate healthcare professional to provide support.
- The location of applicant’s residence.
- Availability of trusted persons able to take delivery of the item/s at the applicant’s place of residence.

## 4.6 Prescriber Handover

If the initial device prescriber ceases to provide care for the applicant (e.g., initial prescription through hospital clinician/nurse, and the applicant has been discharged home)



the prescriber should ensure that they have clearly communicated the program requirements to the team providing ongoing care. Handover should include:

- Contact information and guidelines for MASS PCSDP.
- List of equipment provided through MASS PCSDP, the date of provision, and the due date for review/request for extension.

## 4.7 Repairs and Maintenance

MASS PCSDP is guided and informed by the [PallConsult](#) resources, for policy and procedure. The treating area/Hospital and Health Service is responsible for ensuring that the device is used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Repairs and maintenance arising from reasonable 'wear and tear' is included within the scope of the MASS PCSDP. Repairs and maintenance of equipment is outsourced to third party suppliers; however, it will be coordinated and managed through the MASS Specialised Services Team. The treating area/Hospital Health Service is responsible for repairs or replacement due to accidental damage caused by negligence when the manufacturers recommendations have not been adhered to.

Repairs may not be able to be completed immediately and it is important for applicants/carers to have a backup plan in case of equipment issues. If the loan equipment cannot be repaired, MASS will arrange for a replacement loan item to be delivered promptly.

For equipment requiring repair or maintenance, the MASS Specialised Services team must be contacted, between 8.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday:

- (07) 3136 3696
- [MASS-SpecialisedServices@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-SpecialisedServices@health.qld.gov.au)

## 4.8 Equipment Delivery and Equipment Collection

Health Services will utilise local procedures for the collection and delivery of equipment. A contact person must be nominated on the MASS PCSDP application form, and contact details provided to the HHS to provide this to the contractor allocated for the delivery or collection request.

Equipment on loan under the MASS PCSDP is required to be returned to the location providing the device.

MASS must be contacted to advise that the syringe driver is no longer required. The treating area/Hospital and Health Service is responsible for arranging prompt collection of the equipment where required. The treating area/Hospital and Health Service will be responsible for cleaning the device between applicant issue according to local infection control procedures.

# 5 Applicant Feedback and Complaints Mechanism

## 5.1 MASS PCSDP Participation – Evaluation and Online feedback form

To evaluate the program effectiveness, MASS has developed an evaluation online feedback form. Completion of the online feedback form is not mandatory but is highly recommended.

The feedback provided will enable MASS to provide reports and analysis of the program progress to the Department of Health as part of the CaRs initiative.

- Online Feedback Form Name: PCSDP Prescriber Online feedback form.
- Target Audience: Prescribers.
- Online feedback form Period: At any time during, or after the loan equipment period.

## 5.2 Complaints and feedback

MASS recognises that consumer feedback, both positive and negative, is essential to provide a quality service that meets the needs of our consumers. Compliments and complaints can be made both verbally and in writing using the above noted online feedback form, or by using the forms as detailed below.

Consumers such as prescribers, applicants and their advocates are encouraged to provide feedback regarding the service they have received from the PCSDP and associated suppliers.

All complainants are treated with respect, sensitivity and remain confidential. Complainants will not be subjected to any prejudicial treatment as a result of making a complaint about the standard of service received.

The consumer's privacy is protected in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 and the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011.

MASS will endeavour to provide feedback to the complainant on the progress of their complaint at regular intervals throughout the complaint management process.

To assist the process, consumers are encouraged to provide factual and full information of their concern. Complaints will be managed according to the nature of the issue, as follows:

- Issues concerning the performance of MASS during service provision will be investigated and resolved, if possible, at the local MASS level.
- Issues concerning the outcome of an application to MASS for assistance will involve an objective review of the issues by MASS administrative, clinical and management personnel, and if necessary, co-opted health professionals.
- Issues concerning the performance of suppliers and/or the assistive products they have provided will be investigated and resolved, if possible, by the MASS Contracts Coordinator. Note: to investigate and resolve these issues it will generally be necessary

for MASS to contact the supplier, who by nature of the investigation, may be able to identify the consumer even if names are not provided by MASS to the supplier.

Complaints that cannot be resolved at the local level are referred to the Director of MASS for consideration or appropriate referral to the Health Service Chief Executive Metro South Health.

## 5.3 Compliments and Complaints Form

These forms are available on the MASS website at [health.qld.gov.au/mass/subsidy-schemes/mass](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass/subsidy-schemes/mass) and from MASS service centres:

- [MASS81 Client/Prescriber Satisfaction Feedback Form](#)
- [MASS80 Supplier Performance Report Form](#)
- [Complaints and Compliments Form](#)

## 5.4 Reapplications and Appeals

Reapplications or appeals about the outcome of an application, may be made in writing, by the prescriber, to the appropriate MASS Service Manager, with the provision of additional written clinical supportive information.

The appropriate MASS Service Manager will initially address reapplications or appeals.

If the applicant remains ineligible for MASS assistance following reassessment by the appropriate MASS Service Manager, and the applicant or prescriber still wished to appeal the MASS decision, the appeal will be objectively reviewed by MASS administrative, clinical and management personnel, and if necessary, co-opted health professionals.

Appeals which are rejected to the applicant's dissatisfaction are referred to the Director of MASS for consideration or appropriate referral to the Health Service Chief Executive Metro South Health.

## 5.5 Accidents and Incidents

The monitoring of incidents plays an important role in ensuring that MASS improves service delivery to its consumers by minimising potential risks. The MASS accident and incident monitoring process supports a preventative approach by monitoring events that have, or may lead to, unintended harm, complaint, loss or damage.

The [MASS83 Accident and Incident Report Form](#) is available on the MASS website at [health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass) and from MASS service centres. Completed forms should be returned to the local MASS service centre or emailed to the relevant MASS service area – refer to MASS Service Centre contact details.

## 6 Privacy Statement

The Queensland Health, MASS is collecting administrative, demographic and clinical data as part of the MASS application process, in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 and Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, in order to assess an applicant's eligibility for funding assistance for the supply of assistive technology.

The information will only be accessed by Queensland Health officers. Some of this information may be given to the applicant's carer or guardian; other government departments who provide associated services; the prescribing health professional for further clinical management purposes; and to those parties (e.g., commercial suppliers, community care and repairers) requiring the information for the purpose of providing assistive technology and services.

Your information will not be given to any other person or organisation except where required by law.

If the information provided in the application is not complete or accurate, MASS may not be able to properly assess the application. If any details change, or if the applicant finds the personal information MASS holds is inaccurate, the applicant must contact MASS and reasonable steps will be taken by MASS to ensure the information is corrected.

Queensland Health has a long-standing commitment to ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of personal information collected by the department. That commitment is supported by nine National Privacy Principles in the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld) ([legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2009/09AC014.pdf](http://legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2009/09AC014.pdf)) (in relation to all personal information held by the department) and strict confidentiality obligations found in Part 7 of the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 (Qld) ([legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2011-032](http://legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2011-032)) (in relation to health information held by the department).