Ten Opioid Safety Messages

- 1. Ensure you know:
 - Why the opioid medicine has been prescribed for you.
 - How long you are expected to use the opioid medicine for.
 - How long the opioid medicine will take to work.
 - How to use the opioid medicine if sustainedrelease and immediate-release formulations have been prescribed together.



- Requirements for the review and monitoring of treatment.
- Be knowledgeable about opioids and their short and long term risks by reading the patient information leaflet 'Taking Opioids for Pain' which can be accessed on: <u>https://www.fpm.ac.uk/faculty-of-pain-medicine/opioids-aware</u> or alternatively request a paper copy from the West Suffolk Community Pain Service.
- 3. Always read the manufacturer's patient information leaflet.
- Be aware that opioids, pain and tiredness may affect your ability to drive. Seek advice from your prescriber about driving safely and ensure you are familiar with the UK law.
- 5. Always take prescribed opioids as instructed from your prescriber never take more doses than what has been prescribed.
- Always avoid taking opioids to help you fall asleep or manage anxiety or distress.
- 7. Understand the risks of taking opioids with sedatives, anti-anxiety medications, pregabalin (Lyrica), gabapentin and alcohol.
- 8. Your prescribed opioid medicine must only be used by you never share or sell your prescription opioids with others regardless of the situation.
- Be vigilant with the safekeeping of both opioid prescriptions and medicines to minimise the risk of other people having access to them. Consider a lockable storage box.
- 10. Always ensure manufacturer's recommendations on storage and safe disposal are followed to reduce the risk of access to children, pets or anyone who might misuse them.