


To: San Mateo County Prehospital Care Providers

From: Gregory H. Gilbert, MD, FAAEM 

Date: June 12, 2018

Subject: Fentanyl and Morphine Availability, Interim Pain Policies, and End-of-Life Option

Fentanyl and Morphine

We continue to experience shortages of medications including our controlled substances for pain relief. Many JPA agencies have received their shipments of Fentanyl and are not able to stock Morphine. Although we'd like to have the whole system transition at one time, the reality is that is not possible due to ongoing shortages resulting in unpredictable inventories of both Morphine and Fentanyl. Due to these circumstances and an unknown time frame for resolution, I'm authorizing either Fentanyl or Morphine for use. Units may carry either Morphine or Fentanyl but NOT both on the same apparatus at the same time. Your supervisors will be monitoring the stock and the inventory. Review the dosing information for Fentanyl prior to use.

Interim Adult and Pediatric Pain Policies

Interim adult and pediatric pain policies are attached in our current format. These include dosing information for Fentanyl. For pediatric dosages, utilize the 2013, "old" pediatric drug card for Morphine doses and the 2018 "new" pediatric drug card for Fentanyl.

Aid-in-Dying Act

A judge has suspended California's Aid-in-Dying or End of Life Option Act which we cover in Operations 10. Currently, the Aid-in-Dying is on hold with further legal opinions to follow. For now, should you encounter this situation, contact the Base Hospital for direction.

Please contact the EMS Agency with questions. Thank you for the high-quality care you provide to our patients.

