

# Communication regarding the administration of medications in schools

The following information is available for schools to use in their communications (newsletter, website etc) to parents/carers regarding the administration of medications in Queensland state schools.

## 1. Administering medication at school

If your child requires staff to administer medication to your child at school, please contact the school office in the first instance to discuss your child's requirements.

Please note, school staff will only administer medication that:

- has been prescribed by a qualified health practitioner (e.g. doctor, dentist)
- is in its original container
- has an attached pharmacy label.

Office staff will ask you to complete and sign Section 1 of the *Administration of medication at school record sheet*.

N.B. If your child requires more than one medication, you will need to complete a form for each medication.

## 2. Requirements for students at risk of anaphylaxis

If your child is at risk of anaphylaxis, it is important for you to provide the school with your child's emergency medication and their ASCIA Anaphylaxis Action Plan, completed by your doctor. This Anaphylaxis Action Plan provides the instructions for the school to administer your child's medication in an emergency, which is specific to respond to their health condition.

If you have any concerns about your child's health condition, please contact <insert contact details>

## 3. Requirements for students at risk of asthma

If your child has asthma and requires assistance to administer their medication, it is important for you to provide the school with your child's emergency medication and their Asthma Action Plan, completed by your doctor. An Asthma Action Plan provides specific instructions for the school to administer your child's medication.

We recognise that some students are capable of managing their asthma without adult assistance. If you are confident that your child can confidently, competently and safely self-administer their asthma medication, let the school administration know. The school will record your decision and will not require your child's Asthma Action Plan. Please note that if your child requires assistance in an asthma emergency, staff will provide Asthma First Aid.

If you have any concerns about your child's asthma, please contact <insert contact details>

## 4. Providing medication to the school

Before you provide the school with your child's medication, check the expiry date to ensure it is in-date and there is enough for the agreed time period. It is also a good idea to take a note of the expiry date so that you can replace the medication before it expires.

Please note, school staff will not administer medication that you can buy over-the-counter at chemists and supermarkets (e.g. paracetamol, eye drops, cough syrup) unless it has been prescribed by your child's qualified health practitioner. For example, the school would administer paracetamol to a student only if it has been prescribed by their dentist to be taken for a short time after dental treatment.

School staff are bound by these regulations and we hope that all parents will acknowledge and cooperate with these rules.

It is safer for all students if you can provide medication to the school in person (rather than send medication with the student). If you can't provide the medication in person, contact the school to determine the easiest and safest approach for the school to receive the medication.

If you believe your child is capable of self-administering their own medication at school, please contact me to discuss, as this requires my approval.

When your child's medication is no longer required to be kept at school, please collect all unused medication.

Thank you for your assisting the school in keeping our students safe and healthy.

Yours sincerely <Principal>

## 5. Working with the school to support your child's asthma needs

For many students, asthma will be a lifelong health condition, so it is important for students as they become older and more capable, to recognise their signs and symptoms and be confident to administer their own medication independently when required.

If your child is not yet confident with this and you would like the school to administer asthma medication to your child, it would assist us if you could provide an Asthma Action Plan, completed and signed by your child's doctor when you provide their prescribed medication to the school.

However, when you feel that your child can confidently, competently and safely administer the right dose of their own medication at the right times and can store their medication securely, let the office know. We will note/update your child's medical records to reflect your decision.

The school only needs your child's Asthma Action Plan if staff are administering or helping your child to administer their asthma medication, or if their emergency response is complex.

Our school has staff trained to provide Asthma First Aid in an emergency to any student demonstrating signs and symptoms of serious asthma attack.

If you are unsure whether your child is ready to self-administer, or if your child's health condition changes, please contact <insert contact> to discuss further.

Thank you for assisting us in supporting your child's health needs.

## 6. Follow-up letter to parent/carer of child with medication requirements

### *Working with the school to support your child's medication needs*

Dear <parent/carer name>

Thank you for completing the school's required paperwork and providing your child's medication for the school. School staff will administer it as required, but it is important for you to tell the school:

- of any advice provided by your child's medical practitioner or pharmacist concerning this medication
- if changes occur to your child's medication requirements (provide the school with an accompanying letter/action plan from the prescribing health practitioner about these changes)
- if medication is being transported with your child for purposes other than administration at school (e.g. respite, shared parental arrangements, before and after school care).

If your child has routine medication (i.e. it is administered on a regular or long term basis e.g. insulin, Ritalin) or emergency medication (e.g. adrenaline auto-injector, asthma reliever), it is important to discuss your child's specific needs with their teacher and the principal. School staff involved will discuss how they will plan to support your child's needs, which will depend on their health condition.

### *Talking to doctors and pharmacists about your child's medication*

You can help the school in administering medication to your child, by talking to your doctor and pharmacist about the packaging of medications. In particular, you could:

- ask your doctor if your child's medication could be:

- administered before or after school, rather than during school hours
- dispensed in a form to make administration easier (e.g. blister packs for tablets, liquid form rather than tablets for gastrostomy devices)
- ask the pharmacist if the medication could be provided in a multi-dose pack with clear administration directions (where appropriate), particularly when multiple medications are prescribed

Where your child's medication dosage may vary on a daily basis (e.g insulin), you should ask your doctor:

- for written advice to identify who will advise the school of the dosage and
- under what specific criteria (e.g. blood glucose level, behaviour) the dosage will vary.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's health and medication requirements, please talk to your child's teacher.

Yours sincerely

<Principal>.