

Early Years Policy – QA 2.10 Medical Conditions & Medications

TRIM Reference: D15/32925 Due for Review: 29 September 2023
Responsible Officer: Coordinator Early Years

Purpose

This policy outlines Surf Coast Shire Council's (Council) commitment to ensure that:

- the Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services have current health information for each child accessing the services;
- there are clear procedures for the management of medical conditions, including asthma, diabetes or a diagnosis of a child at risk of anaphylaxis;
- the administering of medication to a child (considered a high risk practice) strictly adheres to the legislative requirements contained within *the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic)* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and the *Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020*;
- parents/guardians of an enrolled child with a specific health care need, allergy or other relevant medical condition is provided with a copy of this policy and procedure (*r 91*);
- staff/educators are informed about the practices to be followed (*r 90(1) (c)(IV)(A)*).

Policy Principles

Education and Care Services National Law – 167(1) (2) and (3)

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 90–96; 168(2)(d); 177(b); 177(c); 178(b); 178(c); 181–184

National Quality Standards – Element 2.1.1; Element 2.1.4; Element 2.3.2; Standard 4.1, Element 7.3.5
Victorian Children's Services and Education Legislation Amendment (Anaphylaxis Management) Act 2019
Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2020, r 61.

Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2019

Maternal and Child Health Service Program Guidelines 2019

Scope

This policy applies to all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff, students, volunteers, Family Day Care Educators and children and their families accessing the services.

Children's Needs

To meet their medical condition and medication needs whilst in the service.

Families' Needs

Families expect that staff/educators will: act in the best interests of the children in their care at all times; meet their children's individual health care needs; maintain continuity of medication for their children when the need arises; provide information with regard to the service's policy on administering any medications.

Educator/Staff Needs

Receiving up to date and current information about the child's medication and medical needs from parents/guardians; inclusive of the completion of all relevant documentation in relation to the child's medical needs. In caring for children, staff/educators need to understand their liabilities and duty of care requirements; be provided with sufficient information and training regarding medical conditions, the administration of medications and other treatments appropriate to an Early Years Services environment.

Policy

The Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff, educators and volunteers will, at all times act in the best interests of the children and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all children being educated and cared for at the service.

The Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services understands that staff/educators will NEVER attempt to diagnose a child's illness or decide on the dose of medication to be given.

1. Medical Conditions Policy and Procedure

Children with Medical Conditions

- On application of enrolment, the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to complete full details about their child's medical conditions. The service will assess whether educators/staff are appropriately trained to manage the child's specific healthcare needs or relevant medical conditions at that time.
- The child's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be provided with a copy of this *Medical Conditions and Medications Policy and Procedure* on enrolment. If this is not possible, they will be directed to the policy on the Surf Coast Shire website.
- Where children require medication or have healthcare needs for long-term conditions, the child's doctor or allied health professional and parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete a *Medical Management Plan*. Such a plan will detail the child's healthcare support needs including administration of medication and other actions required to manage the child's condition. The Medical Management Plan must be signed by the parent/guardian and Doctor for the child to attend the service.
- The service will also consult with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) to develop a *Risk Minimisation Plan*. This plan will:
 - assess the risks relating to the child's specific health care needs, allergy or medical condition;
 - any requirements for safe handling, preparation and consumption of food;
 - notification procedures that inform other families about allergens that pose a risk;
 - procedures for ensuring educators/staff/volunteers can identify the child, their medication and the *Medical Management Plan*.
- A *Communications Plan* that is culturally sensitive must also be developed to ensure that all relevant staff/educators and volunteers are informed about the medical conditions policy, the *Medical Management Plan* and the *Risk Minimisation Plan* for the child; and to allow a child's parent(s)/guardian(s) to communicate any changes to these plans; setting out how the communication can occur.
- Children with specific healthcare needs must be reassessed on a regular basis, in regard to the child's needs and the service's continuing ability to manage the child's healthcare needs, depending on the specific child's medical condition.
- If there are any changes to the *Medical Management Plan* an update is required. This is the responsibility of parent/guardian. The service will re-assess its ability to care for the child, including whether educators/staff are appropriately trained to manage the child's ongoing needs in relation to their medical condition.

Note: if an enrolled child with medical conditions presents for a session of care at the service without their medication, the nominated supervisor will not accept them until their prescribed medication is available.

Medical Management Plan - a range of templates are utilised as applicable to the medical condition and what is provided by the medical practitioner.

Refer to: *Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan template (D17/30062)*.

1.1 Asthma and Asthma Reliever Medications

- Asthma reliever medications (e.g. *Ventolin, Asmol, Airomir, Epaq*) will be stored out of reach of children, in an easily accessible central location for staff.
- Where reliever medications together with a spacer are included in the service's First Aid kit, in case of an emergency situation; the use by date must be checked on a regular basis as part of the First Aid Kit regular checks.

- Refer to *Early Years First Aid Policy & Procedure*.
- Educators/staff who will be responsible for administering asthma reliever medication to children diagnosed with asthma in their care, should attend either Asthma Education in-service or an accredited course. Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services use the Asthma Foundation recommended guidelines on asthma management within the child care setting; including the *Medical Management Plan*, which should be completed for each child diagnosed with asthma.

Use of Relievers (e.g. Ventolin) in Children who are Not Diagnosed with Asthma

- Asthma Victoria advises that children who are not diagnosed with asthma may be prescribed asthma reliever during cold and flu season.
- They are not required to have a completed asthma management plan; however the asthma reliever must have been prescribed by a medical practitioner and have instructions for use in order for the service to be able to administer it.
- Parents/guardians must complete the *Medication Record* which authorises staff/educators to provide the medication to the child.

1.2 Asthma Emergencies

If a child who has been diagnosed with asthma, and exhibits symptoms described in their individual *Medical Management Plan*; staff/educators will respond to the emergency as per their medical practitioner developed and endorsed *Medical Management Plan*.

Please note spacers and face masks are single-person use only. It is essential to have at least two spacers and two face masks contained in each first aid kit and that spacers and face masks are replaced each time they are used. Face masks are to be used by children unable to coordinate correct breathing through the mouthpiece of the spacer.

1.3 Respiratory Emergencies

In the case of a respiratory emergency in a child not diagnosed with asthma (once it has immediately been established by a First Aid qualified staff member that there is nothing blocking the child's throat); asthma reliever medication from the services First Aid Kit may be administered to a child without written parent/guardian authorisation in consultation with medical advice (Call 000). If medication is administered the parent/guardian of the child or the child's registered medical practitioner will be contacted as soon as possible.

The National Asthma Council (NAC), which is the national governing body best practice asthma management, recommends that should a child not known to have asthma, who appears to be in severe respiratory distress, the following medical management plan should be followed immediately. The following steps are recommended:

- If someone collapses and appears to have difficulty breathing, call an ambulance immediately, whether or not the person is known to have asthma;
- Give 4 separate puffs of a reliever inhaler (give one puff at a time with 4-6 breaths after each puff). Use a spacer if available;
- Wait 4 minutes. If the child still cannot breathe normally give 4 more separate puffs (one puff at a time with 4-6 breaths after each puff). Use a spacer if available;
- Keep giving 4 separate puffs every 4 minutes until the ambulance arrives;
- No harm is likely to result from giving reliever medication to someone who does not have asthma.

Note: In all emergency situations the parent/guardian will always be contacted at the earliest opportunity.

If asthma medication has been administered to a previously undiagnosed child (as per regulation 94 of the National Regulations 2011), written notice must be given to the parents/guardians of the child as soon as practicable via the completion of an Incident Form, signed by the responsible person in charge and the parent/guardian and also needs to be recorded on the *Medication Record*.

1.4 Managing Food Intolerances and Allergies

Food Intolerances

Children may suffer from food intolerances and this information will be provided by families on a *Risk Minimisation Plan* which details the foods the child must avoid. Food intolerances are not allergies. Food intolerance is an adverse reaction that does not involve the immune system, although the trigger may be similar.

Food Allergies

Food allergies can occur when the body's immune system reacts to food. People with allergies usually have sensitive immune systems, and when an allergy causing protein or allergen is introduced to their system, the body's immune system reacts by attacking the allergen.

- This can cause a chain of events that can cause swelling and irritation in certain parts of the body.
- Reaction can occur immediately, in a few minutes or after a few hours.
- Food allergies can occur at any age, most commonly in childhood. Some common allergens include peanuts, soy, milk, eggs, wheat and seafood. Some children grow out of their allergies, while for others the reaction may become more severe with each exposure to the allergen.
- An allergic reaction is not the same as an asthma episode; people with food allergies don't necessarily have asthma, and vice versa.
- A severe allergic reaction can result in difficulties breathing because of obstruction of the upper airway. This should not be confused with an asthma attack.
- Children with known allergies must have a *Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan* and a *Medical Management Plan* (see under Anaphylaxis below) and Early Years Services staff/educators must refer to these plans.

1.5 Anaphylaxis

Staff/educators that are caring for a child with anaphylaxis must be trained in the usage of an auto adrenalin device by the parent/guardian, doctor, or other authorised practitioner. A *Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan and Medical Management Plan* will be required to be completed by parents/guardians and displayed on the premises

- Whenever a child with severe allergies is enrolled at the service, or newly diagnosed as having a severe allergy, a *Communications Plan* will be developed to inform all relevant educators/staff of:
 - the child's name and room;
 - the child's *Risk Minimisation Plan*;
 - where the child's *Medical Management Plan* will be located;
 - where the child's adrenaline auto-injector is located;
 - ensuring qualified staff/educators will be responsible for administering the adrenaline auto-injector.
- The *Communications Plan* is to ensure any changes to a child's health care needs are discussed between parents/guardians and staff/educators; and the *Medical Management Plan* and *Risk Minimisation Plan* are updated as required
- The service will advise families through the posting of a notice in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, which states that a child who has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis is enrolled at the service. Depending on the child's allergens, families will also be advised of allergens to avoid bringing to the service.

Note: A child diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis will not be admitted into the service on that day if the adrenaline auto-injector is not provided by the family. In addition, it is the family's responsibility to take the adrenaline auto-injector home after each session.

1.6 Anaphylaxis Emergencies

- For a child who has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis and is exhibiting symptoms described in their individual *Medical Management Plan* (as detailed by their parents and medical practitioner) educators/staff will follow the child's *Medical Management Plan*.
- An ambulance will always be called - 000.
- The service will follow the directions of the Ambulance Officer.
- If used, the used auto-injector and other relevant information will be given to ambulance officers on their arrival.

1.7 Diabetes

- Surf Coast Shire Council will ensure that each child with type 1 diabetes has a current individual *Medical Management Plan* prepared by the individual child's diabetes medical specialist team, at or prior to enrolment, and implement strategies to assist children with type 1 diabetes.
- The child's *Medical Management Plan* provides staff/educators with all required information about the child's diabetes care needs.
- The service, in conjunction with parents/guardians will also develop a *Risk Minimisation Plan* for the child.

Key points for staff/educators to support children with type 1 diabetes are:

- Follow the service Medical Conditions Policy and Procedures for medical emergencies for children with type 1 diabetes.
- Parents/guardians should notify the service immediately about any changes to the child's individual *Medical Management Plan*.
- Contact Diabetes Australia (Victoria) for further support or information as required.

1.8 Medical Action Plans

All *Medical Management Plans*, *Action Plans*, *Risk Minimisation* and *Communication Plans* related to Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Diabetes and Allergy (and other medical conditions) must be reviewed annually (and at other times when changes apply) and monitored by a medical practitioner.

Note: A range of *Medical Management Plan* templates will be utilised based on the medical condition of the child and the document provided to/by the medical practitioner. The *Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan* is part of the enrolment form.

1.9 Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services Employees - Medical Conditions and Asthma/Anaphylaxis Emergencies

Refer to Surf Coast Shire Council Policies and Procedures.

1.10 Family Day Care Educators - Medical Conditions and Asthma/Anaphylaxis Emergencies

Family Day Care educators who become ill whilst Family Day Care children are in their care are to:

- Contact the Coordination Unit and;
- Phone their emergency contact or call an ambulance as indicated by their medical condition and circumstances.

2. Medications Policy and Procedure

The Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services aims to provide a safe environment for all enrolled children and ensures that the high risk practice of administering medications to children is carefully monitored to reduce any risk to the health and well-being of children.

Educators/staff responsible for administering medications must be trained in the administration of medications and also know what first aid measures to take should an adverse reaction to the medication occur.

Staff/educators are not qualified medical practitioners and therefore cannot diagnose appropriate treatment. Staff/educators will not:

- Administer medications to children without written parental/guardian authority as previously defined in the enrolment record.
- Administer non-prescribed medications.
- Perform any treatments without first receiving appropriate professional training.
- Accept children into the service who require a health care regime which uses medical procedures, before staff are appropriately and professionally trained, and feel confident and comfortable with that training and the process for administering any required medication.
- Accept a child with health care needs without a risk minimisation plan being completed on enrolment of the child.
- Accept a child for care without their prescribed health care needs medication.

Note: Family Day Care parents/guardians are to complete the *Medication Record*.

(Refer to 2.2 *Medication Record*)

2.1 Training/Authority to Treat

The definition of 'trained educator/staff member' in this policy refers to those educators/staff who have received relevant appropriate training in the treatments or techniques required to respond to medical conditions and to administer medication as outlined below:

Centre-based services

The following persons must be at any place where children are being educated and cared for by the service and immediately available in an emergency and at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service:

- at least one educator who holds a current approved first aid qualification.
- at least one educator who has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training.
- at least one educator who has undertaken current approved emergency asthma management training (*r136*).

Note: For required training renewal periods refer to the Regulations.

Note: The same person may hold one or more of the above qualifications.

Where children are being educated and cared for on a school site the educators referred to above may be in attendance at the school site and immediately available.

In addition, all staff on duty whenever children are being cared for or educated must have undertaken training in administration of the adrenaline auto injection device and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) at least every 12 months.

It is recommended that all staff members practice using the adrenaline auto injection devices annually, whether or not a child with anaphylaxis is enrolled and attending the service.

The first aid training must include training in the following:

- emergency life support and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation;
- convulsions;
- poisoning;
- respiratory difficulties;
- management of severe bleeding; and
- injury and basic wound care appropriate for children (*regulation 63 (2)*).

Family Day Care services

Family Day Care services need to ensure that each family day care educator and family day care assistant engaged or registered with the service:

- holds a current approved first aid qualification;
- has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training; and
- has undertaken current approved emergency asthma management training.

Where the service cannot provide sufficient numbers of adequately and appropriately trained educators/staff members who feel comfortable and confident to perform medical procedures or administer medication to the child, it may be agreed that the parent will come to the service to administer the medication, or arrangements made for a health professional to administer the medication at the service. Without one of these strategies in place, education and care at the service will not be possible.

2.2 Medication Record

All Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services will ensure that a *Medication Record* is kept that includes the following:

- name of the child;
- the authorisation to administer medication, signed by a parent/guardian or person named in the enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication;
- name of the medication;
- time and date the medication was last administered;
- time and date, or the circumstances under which the medication should be next administered;
- dosage of the medication to be administered;
- manner in which the medication is to be administered.

If the medication is administered to the child:

- dosage that was administered;
- manner in which it was administered;
- time and date medication was administered;
- name and signature of the person who administered it;
- if required under r95; name and signature of other person who checked the medication.

2.3 Administering Medication

Whenever possible, medication should be administered by parents/guardians at home. However this will not always be feasible. Therefore to ensure children's safety and welfare, the giving of medication at the service will be strictly monitored and must be recorded on the applicable forms.

i) General Considerations

- Parents/guardians should consider whether their child who requires medication is well enough to be at the service, and to keep the child at home if unwell.
- If children are receiving medication at home but not at the service, the parent/guardian should advise staff/educator of the nature of the medication and its purpose and any possible side effects it may have for the child.
- The service will ensure that medication is only given when it is authorised and complies with this policy.
- Only prescribed medications will be administered (unless asthma reliever from the services First Aid Kit are required in response to an asthma emergency/respiratory distress emergency as previously referred to).
- Staff/educators must be fully trained to all requirements contained within *Medical Management Plans* and *Risk Minimisation Plans*.

ii) Non prescribed medications – Over the Counter Medications

- Non-prescription medications (available over the counter) are NOT to be received into the service or administered to children in the service by staff/educators; (unless asthma reliever from the services First Aid Kit are required in response to an asthma emergency/respiratory distress emergency as previously referred to).
- Alternative, homoeopathic, naturopathic and traditional medications are NOT to be accepted into the service or administered to children in the service by staff/educators.
- The Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services do not permit the self-administration of medications by children.

iii) Storage of Medications

- Medication must be given directly to staff/educator by family on arrival and not left in the child's bag or locker. On departure, the medication must be given by the educator to the parent/guardian to be taken home.
- All prescribed medications must have the original pharmacist's dispensing label, or written and signed details provided by the doctor giving:
 - the child's name
 - name of medication
 - dosage
 - frequency
 - way it is to be administered
 - date of dispensing
 - expiry date
 - Storage requirements (e.g. refrigeration)
- Immediately after administration of a dose, the medication must be returned to the appropriate storage area.
- All medication will be stored safely out of reach of children, but readily accessible to authorised educators/staff, and in accordance with the medication requirements.

iv) Process of Administration of Medications

- Before medication is given to a child the first aid trained educator/staff member will verify the correct dosage as prescribed by the doctor and child with another educator/staff member against the relevant *Medication Record*. (In Family Day Care this is usually not possible and the educator will need to carefully check the correct dosage and child against the *Medication Record*).
- After giving the medication both educator/staff member will complete the details on the *Medication Record* as outlined under 5.2.2 *Medication Record* in this document.
- Medication must NEVER be put into a child's bottle or drinking cup, unless instructed (in writing) to do so by a medical practitioner.
- Where the medication requires administration via other than an oral route or external application, only those educators/staff who feel comfortable to administer the medication; have a current First

Aid Certificate and have received specific instruction from a health care professional will administer the medication.

- If providing education and care for school age children:
 - the self-administration of medication by children must be supervised by educator / staff
 - educator / staff to record self-administration of medication in medication form.

v) Application of Ointments or Creams:

- Parents are responsible for providing all creams and ointments in their original container/packaging directly to staff/educators on arrival at the service.
- All creams and ointments must be labelled by the parent/guardian with the child's name and date of birth (please ensure directions for use are not concealed).
- The application of medication as prescribed by a doctor must be recorded in the *Medical Record*.
- Parents/guardians are required to give permission for staff to apply prescribed or over the counter creams or ointments. Educators/staff will not apply ointments, creams or applications to children whose parents/guardians have not provided written consent on the *Medical Record*.
- Staff/educators will observe strict health and hygiene practices when applying prescribed or over the counter ointment or creams, to minimise risks to themselves and children.

Note: School attending children may be practised in managing the application of 'over the counter' creams e.g. 'lip balm' etc. and are competently able to self-administer these creams. Services can undertake an assessment of a child's capacity to undertake this, including:

- Age of the child
- Child's ability to self-administer the cream
- Period of time over which the child has self-administered the cream.

Definitions

Medical condition:	This may be described as a condition that has been diagnosed by a registered medical practitioner
Medical management plan:	A document that has been prepared and signed by a registered medical practitioner that describes symptoms, causes, clear instructions on action and treatment for the child's specific medical condition, and includes the child's name and a photograph of the child.
Risk minimisation plan:	A document prepared by service staff for a child, in consultation with the child's parents, setting out means of managing and minimising risks relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or other relevant medical condition
Communication plan:	A plan that forms part of the policy and outlines how the service will communicate with families and staff in relation to the policy. The communication plan also describes how families and staff will be informed about risk minimisation plans and emergency procedures to be followed when a child diagnosed as at risk of any medical condition such as anaphylaxis is enrolled at the service

Related Procedure

Nil.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Policies

SCS-014	Occupational Safety and Health Policy
D14/94986	First Aid Policy
D14/105435	Infectious Diseases Policy
D14/94981	Early Years Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy
D15/16297	Early Years Enrolment Policy
D15/16306	Early Years Orientation of Children and their Families Policy
D15/33004	Early Years Supervision of Children Policy
D15/35300	Early Years Sun Protection Policy

- D14/105413 Early Years Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- D15/35312 Early Years Child Safe Environment Policy
- D15/38683 Early Years Water Safety Policy

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Services Work Instructions and Forms

- D16/54019 Children’s Individual Anaphylaxis and Asthma Medication Expiry Date Form
- D17/30062 Early Years Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan
- D14/48936 Early Years Services Medication Record

Other References

Education and Care Services National Law 2010
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2020
 Victorian Children’s Services Regulations 2020
 Victorian Children’s Services Act 2019ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit
 Childcare Service Handbook (Department of Education)
 First Aide, Anaphylaxis and Asthma Management, DET website 2020
 National Asthma Foundation
 Asthma Victoria
 Definitions & Strategies in the Management of Diabetes for Education & Care Services - (Diabetes Australia Victoria’s advocacy and diabetes educators and The Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne’s Manager of diabetes education in August 2012).

Document History

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