

2.9 Children with Medical Conditions

Policy Statement

The service recognises the prevalence of children attending the services who have health needs and relevant medical conditions including asthma, diabetes or at risk of anaphylaxis, requiring sound practices and planning to ensure their health and wellbeing are cared for. The service is committed to a planned approach to the management of relevant medical conditions, and one that meets the legislative compliance of an education and care service (*Education and Care Services National Regulations 77, 90-96, 160-162, & 168 (2)(d)*).

Importantly, the service recognises some children attend the service with both highly sensitive and potentially life-threatening conditions. Management and responsiveness of these medical needs is a critical aspect of their care. All children with additional health needs or relevant medical conditions will have medical management plans provided and displayed. Additionally, the service will work collaboratively with parents/carers and families to ensure the service understands and addresses risks associated with a child's need/condition (Risk Minimisation Plans). Embedded within these plans are the outlined procedures to update information and actions as required (Communication Plans).

The service is committed to ensuring our educators are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support children's medical needs. The Approved Provider will seek to ensure all children in attendance receive the highest level of care and protection. Where relevant, additional training, resources and knowledge will be provided to educators to support the practices of the service to attend to relevant health and medical needs.

Related Policies

- [2.8 Supporting Additional Needs with Inclusive Practices](#)
- [4.1 Infectious Diseases – Prevention and Response](#)
- [4.3 Incident, Illness, Injury or Trauma](#)
- [4.6 Medication Administration](#)
- [5.1 Food Handling, Preparation and Storage](#)
- [5.2 Food and Nutrition](#)
- [7.1 Emergency and Safety Equipment](#)
- [8.1 Recruitment and Employment of Educators](#)
- [9.2 Enrolment and Orientation](#)
- [9.3 Interactions and Communication with Families](#)
- [10.6 Risk Management](#)

Appendices and Forms

[Medical Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan](#)
[Medication Administration and Authority Form](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure staff are equipped to respond to children's medical needs through collecting relevant information, obtaining medical plans, and accessing relevant training.• Ensure parents/carers receive relevant information and collaboration in managing children's needs.
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the medical needs of children are collected, planned and communicated effectively.• Ensure parents/carers who indicate children with medical needs are informed of the service's obligations and their duties.• Respond to medical needs as required to uphold the safety of children attending the service.• Ensure staff are suitably trained and instructed on the management of relevant medical conditions.
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain knowledge on the relevant condition and action plans of children accessing the service.• Respond to the medical needs of children.• Communicate relevant information to parents and children as required.

Procedures

The procedures to manage children's medical conditions are contained within the following documents:

- Individualised Medical Management (Medical Management, Risk-Minimisation and Communication Plans)
- Practices for the Management of Specific Medical Conditions
 - Asthma Management Practices
 - Managing Children at Risk of Anaphylaxis
 - Diabetes Management Practices

Individualised Medical Need Management (Medical Management, Risk-Minimisation and Communication Plans)

Any child enrolled in the service who has been identified with a health need, allergy or relevant medical condition will require:

- A **Medical Management Plan** to be supplied by the parent in the form of a doctor's letter or e.g., Asthma Plan or an Anaphylaxis Plan (*Regulation 90(c)(i)*);
- The development of one document containing both the **Risk-Minimisation Plan** in consultation with a parent; and a **Communication Plan** (for staff members to be informed of the health and medical needs of children and for parents to understand how to update health/medical information and/or relevant plans).

Medical Management and Risk-Minimisation Plans (*Regulation 90(c)(iii)*)

The service's enrolment forms will outline a child's medical needs. Where the parent indicates a child has an additional medical need, the Nominated Supervisor will communicate with the family to identify the need for a Medical Management form to be supplied from which the Risk-Minimisation and Communication Plan will be developed. A parent may notify the service at any time of a change in a child's medical needs. Where a parent indicates a child has the following, a medical management plan, the risk-management will be requested/developed:

- one of the following conditions:
 - asthma,
 - diabetes
 - diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis
- any allergy or health care need requiring
 - specific action to be taken during an incident
 - relating to food: safe handling, preparation or consumption

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Require a current **Medical Management Plan** be provided to the service by the parent/carer with consent that this is made accessible in a visible location to all educators
- Require plans to be prepared in collaboration with a relevant health professional
- Request parents/carers to review medical management plans annually or as suggested by a health professional/medical authority
- Ensure all educators are adequately trained and rehearsed in the service's emergency medical management procedures and the administration of emergency/rescue medication
- Collaborate with parents/carers of children with specific health needs, allergies or other relevant medical conditions to develop a **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** and
- Inform all educators and volunteers, of children with specific health needs, allergies or other relevant medical conditions and the risk minimisation procedures for these.

Medical Management Plans must be followed in the event of an incident relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition (*Regulation 90(c)(ii)*). The medical management plan should be developed in consultation with the child's registered medical practitioner with the procedures to follow from the medical practitioner documented in the medical management plan. The medical management plan should include the following:

- A photo of the child
- Details of the specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition including the severity of the condition

- Any current medication prescribed for the child
- What may trigger the allergy or medical condition
- Signs and symptoms to be aware of and the required response from the service in relation to the emergence of symptoms
- Any treatment/medication required to be administered in an emergency
- The response required if the child does not respond to initial treatment
- When to call an ambulance for assistance and
- Contact details of the doctor who signed the plan.

Medical Risk-Minimisation Plans are developed in consultation with parents of the child. They are to ensure:

- The risks relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition are assessed and minimised
- If relevant, the safe handling, preparation, consumption and service of food
- If relevant, the parents are notified of any known allergens that pose a risk to a child and strategies for minimising the risk
- All staff members and volunteers can identify the child, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication and
- If relevant, the child does not attend the service without medication prescribed by the child's medical practitioner in relation to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.

Communication Plans (*Regulation 90(c)(iv)*)

Embedded within the Medical Risk-Minimisation Plan will be procedures outlined of how communication of the plan will be undertaken to ensure staff and visitors are aware of relevant risks and strategies.

Additionally, the plan will document how a parent should update any relevant details to the management of or details regarding a child's medical condition. This can include reviewing details of the *Medical/Risk-Minimisation plan*.

To remove any doubt, a child's parent/carer should at any time communicate changes to the Medical Management Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan for the child. While each plan will outline specific steps, the parent should direct these changes to the Nominated Supervisor.

Copy of Policy Provided (*Regulation 91*)

Parents/carers will be provided copies of the *Medical Risk Minimisation Plan* and asked to confirm their approval. Attached to *Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan* will be a copy of this policy ([4.5 Children with Medical Conditions](#)).

Communication of Plans and Policies

Medical Management Plans are kept in the OSHC office. All staff are shown the specific location on induction and are provided with an opportunity to read and understand the content of each plan. The specific location of plans will be made with the agreement of parents/carers. Any location will be discreet from public view and accessible for all educators of the service.

In addition, during daily team meetings, the children with medical needs will be communicated to staff, ensuring their knowledge of the child's attendance in the service on that day. The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for ensuring all educators, other staff and volunteers can identify a child with a specific health care need, allergy or other relevant medical condition and be able to locate their information, plans and medication/s easily.

Risk-Minimisation Plans will be stored with enrolment forms and a copy will be available in the Medical Folders stored near the Children's Medication Area. All risk-minimisation plans will be shared with staff. Educators will sign acknowledgement of reading the Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan. This will document the communication and subsequent understanding of what is required in the case of a medical event occurring.

Practices for the Management of Specific Medical Conditions (Regulation 90(1)(b))

Induction and instruction of this policy will be provided to every staff member or volunteer engaged at the service. Each person must acknowledge they have been trained, read the policy and understand the practices required to support children's health and medical needs.

Individual children's relevant health needs and corresponding plans will be discussed on a regular basis with all educators at team meetings to ensure staff have sound knowledge of practices and emergency management actions.

The service will ensure that at least one educator with a current first-aid and CPR qualification, anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training attend every shift when children are being cared for, and is immediately available in an emergency. The service is committed to exceeding the required minimum standards through providing first-aid and CPR training to include anaphylaxis and asthma.

Educator Training and Qualifications

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that educators have appropriate education or training to enable them to undertake basic support of the health needs of children, including administering medications, responding to allergic reactions, basic first aid and adhering to special dietary requirements.

Additionally, children who are enrolled in the service with medical conditions and needs requiring specialist knowledge or training will be supported. Educators will have access to training relevant to children's medical needs.

Asthma Management Practices (Regulation 90 (1)(a))

All children diagnosed with asthma must have a medical management plan outlining what to do in an emergency. A Risk Minimisation Plan must be developed in consultation with the parent/carer of a child diagnosed with asthma to identify the triggers and how these will be managed and monitored within the service (procedures outlined above). The action outlined in a medical management plan should be followed in the first instance.

Responding to Emergency Asthma Incidents

The procedure outlined in the child's medical management plan should be followed in the first instance (*Regulation 90(c)(ii)*). However, if this does not alleviate the asthma symptoms, or where a child is not known to have asthma (therefore no plan has been provided), an educator will provide first aid following the steps outlined by Asthma Australia. If the treating educator is not trained in emergency asthma management, the emergency asthma qualified educator should be immediately sought by any persons identifying symptoms in a child and/or suspecting a child may be suffering from an asthma flare-up (sometimes referred to as an asthma attack).

Asthma Flare-Up Symptoms

The most common symptoms of asthma are:

- Wheezing – a high-pitched sound coming from the chest while breathing
- A feeling of not being able to get enough air or being short of breath
- A feeling of tightness in the chest
- Coughing.

Practices to Respond to an Asthma Flare-up:

- Sit the child upright
- The educator will be calm and reassuring
- Give four (4) puffs or as instructed amount on the child's Asthma Plan of blue reliever medication with slow and deep breathing in after each puff. If using a spacer, follow each of 4 puffs with 4 breaths in and out following each puff
- Wait four (4) minutes. If there is no improvement, give four (4) more puffs as above
- If there is still no improvement, **call emergency services**; and
- Keep giving four (4) puffs every four (4) minutes until the emergency services arrive.

Authorisation for administering asthma medication is not required in an emergency. Educators should administer medication, then notify the emergency services followed by the parent/carer as soon as practicable (Regulation 94).

In the case of any emergency event, the parent/carer of the child is to be contacted and informed once reasonably practicable to do so. Reporting will follow the practices outlined in *4.5 Incident, Illness, Injury and Trauma policy*.

Emergency Asthma Equipment

The service's first aid kit contains Ventolin (blue puffer) and a spacer. Expiry dates of all puffers used will be closely monitored and replaced when expired. Puffers and spacers from the emergency asthma first aid kit must be thoroughly cleaned after each use to prevent cross contamination.

All asthma medication provided by families and administered by educators and/or self-administered by the child with the condition, must be in accordance with the Medication Policy (see [Policy 4.6](#)) of this service.

Managing Children at Risk of Anaphylaxis (Regulation 90 (1)(a))

The service will take appropriate action to minimise, as far as reasonably practicable, exposure to known allergens where children have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis. These specific actions will be identified through the risk-minimisation planning procedure.

In recognising food allergies are a common (but not the only) source of allergy, in order to minimise the risk of exposure of children to foods that might trigger a severe allergy or anaphylaxis in susceptible children, our service will adopt the following practices:

- Educate children about food allergies and ways to keep people safe
- Actively discourage children to trade or share food, utensils or food containers
- Ensure all food handling supports children's medical management plans
- Request families to label all drink bottles and lunch boxes with their child's name
- Consider the contents of food and non-food items for inconspicuous triggers
- Monitor attendances to ensure that meals/snacks prepared at the service do not contain identified allergens when those children are in care; and
- Where a child is known to have a susceptibility to severe allergy or anaphylactic reaction to a particular food, the service will develop policy and implement practice for the management of children, educators or visitors bringing foods or products to the service containing the specific allergen (e.g. nuts, eggs, seafood).

Symptoms of Anaphylaxis

Can include any one of the following:

- Difficult/noisy breathing
- Swelling of the tongue
- Swelling/tightness in the throat
- Difficulty talking and/or hoarse voice
- Wheeze or persistent cough
- Persistent dizziness and/or collapse
- Pale and floppy (in young children).

In some cases, anaphylaxis is preceded by less dangerous allergic symptoms such as:

- Swelling of face, lips and/or eyes
- Hives or welts
- Abdominal pain and vomiting.

Responding to Symptoms

All children diagnosed with being at risk of anaphylaxis must have a medical management plan outlining what to do in an emergency. This plan will be followed in the first instance (*Regulation 90(c)(ii)*). Additionally, a risk minimisation plan must be developed in consultation with the parent/carers of a child diagnosed with being at risk of anaphylaxis to identify any triggers/allergies and how these will be managed and monitored within the service (procedures outlined above). The action outlined in a medical management plan should be followed in the first instance.

In the case of a child who has not been previously diagnosed with being at risk of anaphylaxis but is displaying symptoms, the following actions will be taken. The emergency anaphylaxis management qualified educator should be immediately sought by any persons identifying symptoms in a child and/or suspecting a child may be suffering an anaphylactic episode.

1. Lay the person flat – do NOT allow them to stand or walk
2. Give adrenaline autoinjector (Epipen)
3. Phone emergency services (ambulance)
4. Phone parent/carers (if practicable)
5. Further adrenaline doses may be given if no response after 5 minutes
6. Transported to hospital by ambulance (for observation)
7. ***If in doubt give another adrenaline autoinjector (Epipen)***
8. Commence CPR at any time a person becomes unresponsive and is not breathing normally

Authorisation for administering adrenaline autoinjector (Epipen or similar) medication is not required in an emergency. Educators should administer medication, then notify the emergency services and then parent/carers as soon as practicable (Regulation 94).

In the case of any emergency event, the parent/carer of the child is to be contacted and informed once reasonably practicable to do so. Reporting will follow the practices outlined in *4.5 Incident, Illness, and Injury and Trauma policy*.

Emergency Medication

The service will always have an in-date adult and child adrenaline autoinjector (Epipen or similar) in our emergency first-aid kit. This will be in addition to (and not a substitute for) the prescribed devices for individual children with a diagnosed anaphylactic allergy.

This device will be used when:

- A child who is known to be at risk of anaphylaxis does not have their own device immediately accessible or the device is out-of-date
- A second dose of adrenaline is required before an ambulance has arrived and emergency services have advised the use
- The child's prescribed device has misfired or accidentally been discharged
- A child not diagnosed/identified as at risk of anaphylaxis is symptomatic.

Each child will have the appropriate medication i.e. Epipen (or similar) accessible to educators. Appropriate medication will be stored at the service for each relevant child. These will be stored in clearly labelled and marked containers. All expiry dates of this medication will be recorded in a replacement schedule, which will be actively monitored by the Nominated Supervisor. Parents will be advised of expiry one month before expiry date.

Replacement of used service Epipen will be required by the parents/carers.

Management Process for Providing Food for Dietary Allergens

Each child having an allergy to food products will have a routine for mealtimes different from others to ensure the safety of the child and minimise risk of anaphylaxis:

- The child's food will be prepared prior to other foods to eliminate risk of contamination
- The food will be placed in a labelled container allocated to the child. The label will contain the child's name and food allergen
- The Year Level Leader for the child's group will give the food container directly to the child, checking with the child their name and allergen before giving the labelled container to the child
- The child will be closely monitored for any signs/symptoms of anaphylaxis.

Diabetes Management Practice (Regulation 90 (1)(a))

Children with type 1 diabetes are at most risk from hypoglycemia (hypo) which occurs when blood sugar levels are too low. Elements that can cause a hypoglycemia include:

- A delayed or missed meal, or a meal with too little carbohydrate
- Extra strenuous or unplanned physical activity
- Too much insulin or medication for diabetes; and/or
- Vomiting.

Hypoglycemia Symptoms

- Headache
- Trembling
- Looking pale
- Feeling hungry
- Sweating
- Lethargy
- Crying
- Being irritable
- Feeling/acting confused

Action to manage this should be outlined in management plans. Educators will follow the steps identified in the plan (Regulation 90(c)(ii)). However, where the plan does not specify actions, the educator will inform the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person. The service will phone parents/carers, and if needed, support the child to ingest some sugar and rest. The child will be actively monitored while resting.

Symptoms of **severe hypoglycemia** include being

- extremely drowsy or disorientated and completely refusing food
- unconscious
- having a fit/convulsion or
- unresponsive.

Any child presenting with these symptoms will require emergency medical attention. The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person will respond by calling **emergency services (000)** for an **ambulance** immediately. Relevant first aid practices will be used in the absence of emergency service advice and/or treatment.

Hyperglycaemia (hyper) occurs when blood sugar levels are too high. It can be caused by not enough insulin administered, eating too many carbohydrates, stress, hormones, weather and physical activity.

Hyperglycemia Symptoms

- Feeling excessively thirsty
- Frequently passing large volumes of urine
- Feeling tired
- Blurred vision
- Infections (e.g., thrush, cystitis, wound infections)
- Weight loss

Action to manage this should be outlined in management plans (Regulation 90(c)(ii)). Where this has not been identified educators will inform the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person. The service will phone parents/carers. It is likely the child will require medication. If needed the service will call emergency services.

Where diabetic management is required, the service will ensure that educators are adequately and appropriately trained in the use of insulin injection devices (syringes, pens, pumps) used by children with diabetes at the service. In the event of major concerns regarding insulin levels of a child, the Nominated Supervisor (or Responsible Person or any relevant educator) will respond by calling **emergency services (000)** for an **ambulance** immediately.

Relevant Laws and Provisions

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011*
- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2 – Children’s health and safety*

E&CS Legislative Compliance

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 168 (2)(d), 90-96, 158, 162*

Policy Controls

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