

2022

Mackay North State School



Medication Policy

Purpose

Provides requirements for the administration of medications to students whilst attending Mackay North State School or school-related activities, in accordance with the advice of the student's prescribing health practitioner or as an emergency first aid response.

Overview

The administration of medications to students by school staff is only considered when a prescribing health practitioner has determined that it is necessary or when there is no other alternative in relation to the treatment of a specific health need. Mackay North State School require *medical authorisation* to administer any medication to students (including over-the-counter medications such as paracetamol or alternative medicines).

Administration of Medical in Schools

The administration of essential medications to manage students' health conditions is part of the Department of Education and Training's (DET) common law duty of care to take reasonable steps to keep students safe while they attend school and to satisfy legislative obligations under the:

- *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)* to facilitate the operation of schools as safe and supportive learning environments;
- the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)* to eliminate or minimise risks to the health, safety and welfare of persons at the school;
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005* to make reasonable adjustments for people with a disability so they may access education on the same basis as a person without a disability.

Having medications on school sites requires schools to implement systems to keep staff and students safe.

Setting up safe Systems

The following table will be completed at the beginning of every academic year to ensure that a safe system is set up to administer routine/short-term medication.

Action Officer	Action	Check
Communication and records management		
Principal or delegate	has determined local requirements for administering medications to minimise errors, based on local circumstances, e.g. two person check, reading dosage twice before administering.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Principal or delegate	has considered a calendar system to alert when students are to receive their medication and/or a reminder system for students if required.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Principal or delegate	has considered if the use of a register to record medications kept in the school (with check-in/out dates) is required.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workplace, health and safety		
Staff administering medication	are familiar with the Infection Control Guideline , e.g. hand washing, disposable cups used for administering medication.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Principal or delegate	has considered the inclusion of responding to medical emergencies into emergency planning and drills.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stock, storage and transport of medications		
Principal or delegate	has a locked cupboard available to store controlled drugs.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Principal or delegate	has a secure fridge available for medications requiring refrigeration if required (i.e. no student access to fridge).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff administering medication	have a stock of equipment required for safe administration of medications, e.g. disposable cups.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Principal or delegate	has determined local requirements for secure storage and transportation of medication if the student is required to carry it to out-of-school hours venues.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff administering medication	are aware of the requirement to read and follow storage requirements for medication on receipt.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Principal or delegate	has communicated to all staff the location of where emergency medication is kept for individual students.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paperwork		
Staff administering medication	have determined where hard copies of the <i>Administration of medication at school record sheet</i> – for both routine/short term and emergency medication will be stored securely but readily accessible when required.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff administering medication	are familiar with the school's medications recording process, including reporting <i>medication errors</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receipt of medication		
Staff administering medication	are aware of the requirement to check that on receipt of medication, it is in the original packaging with a pharmacy label.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff administering medication	are aware of the requirement to check that the medication and dosage requirements on the pharmacy label match Section 1 on the medication record sheets.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students with health plans		
Principal or delegate	has ensured staff who administer medication to students with health plans have received training and support as per the <i>Management of Students with Specialised Health Needs</i> procedure.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff in consultation with SSRN	are familiar with safe processes for administering medication via injections and for managing needle stick injuries.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Protocols for safe administration of medication

The following protocols for safely administering medications.

Protocol	Check
Staff member is authorised by the principal to administer medications.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where a staff member is unfamiliar with the student receiving medication (e.g. due to school size), a school procedure is in place to confirm the student's identity prior to the administration of medications, e.g. photo ID and asking the student's name prior to administering.	<input type="checkbox"/>

The same officer is responsible for selecting, preparing, administering and recording the administration of medication to a student.	<input type="checkbox"/>
All medications are prepared for immediate administration to a single student i.e. medications are NOT prepared in advance for later administration, due to the risks of contamination, potential instability or contamination, potential mix-up with other medications and to maintain security of the medication.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The school has determined which cases require a second person check before administering medications (e.g. doses administered by injection) or complicated dosage requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The school will contact the parent for clarification before administering the dose if a medication order is unclear or ambiguous.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medications are administered, or prepared for administration, directly from the original pharmacy container.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tablets are witnessed as having been consumed by the student.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where applicable, the school has ensured that injectable medications and associated lines and catheters are administered as per the requirements advised in specialised health needs training.	<input type="checkbox"/>








Staff members who are authorised by the Principal to administer medication has completed form and it has been signed off by the Principal. (Appendix 1).

Prior to administration

1. Ensure the parent has provided a signed: Administration of medication at school (routine/short-term medication) or Administration of medication at school (emergency medication) record sheet.
2. Encourage parent/carer to administer the first dose of a new routine/short-term medication for their child and provide advice of any potential side effects of medication if new medication is being administered.
3. Observe standard precautions for infection control relevant to administering medications
4. Ensure medication to be administered has *medical authorisation* e.g. the original container is labelled 'Prescription medication' or 'Controlled drug' or the pharmacy label attached to the original container has the prescribing health practitioner's name.
5. After reviewing the pharmacy label instructions on receipt of medication, if the information contradicts the request from the parent/carer, do not administer medication and seek clarification from the parent/carer.
6. All medication that is received needs to be signed off by the Deputy Principal or Principal (Appendix 3)

During Administration

1. Follow the checklist to ensure protocols for administering routine/short term medication is correct.

I		Infection control procedures...	to be followed, e.g. wash hands, use gloves.
N		Note the directions...	on the <i>Administration of medication at school record sheet (routine/short term medication)</i> , including dosage requirements, and IHP where relevant.
C		Check...	the student's identity.
L		Look at the pharmacy label...	for the student's name, the medication name, dose and route.
A		Administer...	the drug (again checking the dosage requirements and time required for administration listed on the pharmacy label and that the medication is for this student).
S		(Safe disposal where relevant) Sign...	of sharps or equipment used to administer medication to students with specialised health needs, as required. the medication record to prove that the drug has been given.
S		Storage...	of the medication as required, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions (e.g. return original container to the cupboard/fridge, store transported medication appropriately until it is to be administered).

2. Check the instructions as per pharmacy label prior to administration and follow specific instructions, e.g. to be taken with food
3. Dispense medication directly from the original medication container in the presence of the student and administer as soon as possible. *(Two staff members to be present)*
4. Notify the classroom teacher and parent/carer if student refuses their medication to determine possible risks and any further actions
5. Notify the parent/carer if the student misses a dose of their routine/short-term medication.

After Administration

1. Record and complete details in the appropriate record sheet - *either Administration of medication at school (routine/short-term medication) or Administration of medication at school record sheet*

(*emergency medication*) - immediately after the medication is administered to a student (including when students are on school outings, excursions and camps) - (*Two staff members to sign*)

2. Notify the parent/carer if the medication quantity is low or approaching its expiry date.

Medication Errors

- If the incorrect dosage of medication or the incorrect medication has been administered to a student:
 - if the student has collapsed or is not breathing, phone 000 immediately (including mobiles), request ambulance services and follow the advice given
 - if there is no immediate adverse reaction, phone POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE on 131 126 and follow the advice given
 - record the incident of incorrect dosage or incorrect medication as a 'Near miss' (if demonstrating no side effects) or 'injury illness' (if demonstrating side effects) in MyHR Workplace Health and Safety
- Notify the principal and the student's parent/carer of all medication errors (e.g. missed dose, dose refusal, incorrect dosage, incorrect medication).

Response to Side Effects

- If the student has collapsed or is not breathing after receiving medication, immediately phone 000 and follow the advice given.
- If the student presents with side effects (atypical symptoms or behaviours), advise the parent/carer so that they may seek medical advice, notify the principal and record any event related to side effects of medication in student records.

Stolen Medication or Misused Medication

- When medication is stolen or misused, or diverted from the person to whom it was originally prescribed, notify the school principal.

Storage of Medication

- Establish and monitor procedures for safe and appropriate storage of medication in the original containers according to the manufacturer's instructions and special instructions from the pharmacist or prescribing health practitioner (including medication which needs to be stored below 25 degrees Celsius).
- Store medication (other than emergency medication) in a:
 - non-portable, locked space such as cupboard/cabinet reserved for medications only
 - in a secure fridge if required with authorised access only
 - or as directed in the student's Individual Health Plan, Emergency Health Plan or Action Plan.
- Ensure that emergency medication is stored in a safe, unlocked location where it is easily accessible to the authorised student and staff at all times in the event of an emergency.
- Limit access to all prescribed medications to persons authorised to administer medications.
- Ensure accessing medication causes minimal disruption to the student's learning program.

Disposal of Medication and Equipment

- Ensure safe disposal of sharps in accordance with the Safe Handling and Disposal of Needles and Syringes
- Dispose of unused and unclaimed medication by:
 - advising the parent/carer to collect the medication from the school, or
 - advising parents/carers that unclaimed medications will be returned to a pharmacy to be disposed of through the Returning Unwanted Medicines project.

First Aid emergency medications

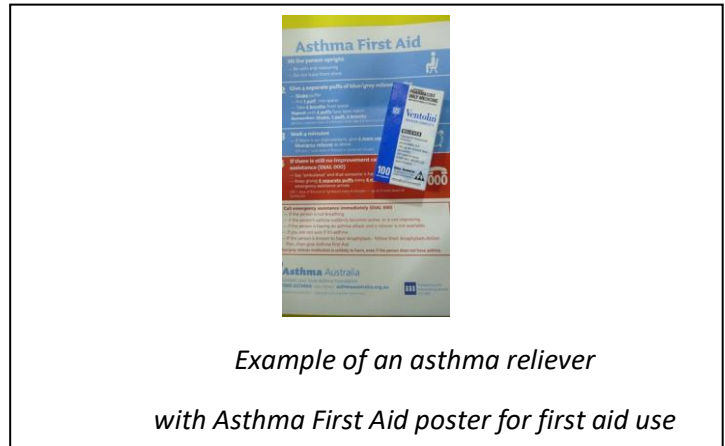
Staff may be required to administer medication to respond to a medical emergency - for students with diagnosed health conditions or as a first aid response to students, staff or visitors.

For a student who has prescribed emergency medication for their health condition, if the medication is required, staff should administer it to the student with reference to the student's Emergency Health Plan

(EHP) or Action Plan and their *Administration of medication at school record sheet (emergency medication)*.

The Department refers to some medications as 'first aid emergency medications', as they are dispensed in devices that non-medical personnel can be trained to use as a first aid response. These medications include adrenaline auto-injectors and asthma relievers.

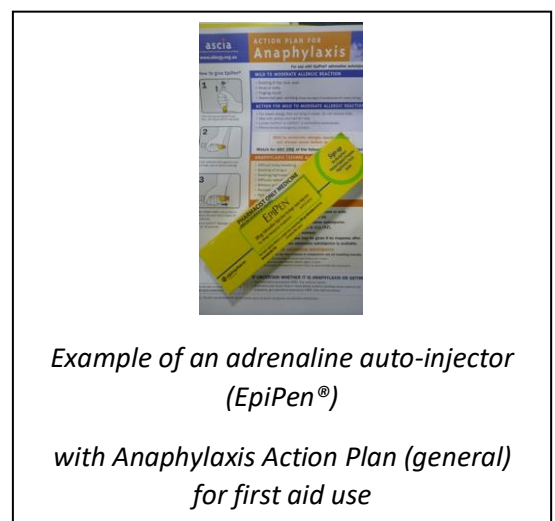
Queensland state schools retain two types of first aid emergency medications in the school first aid kit – an asthma reliever and an adrenaline auto-injector (e.g. EpiPen®) to respond to an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency event. These medications may be administered as a first aid response to students, staff or other personnel on the school site.



Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (General Use for First Aid Kit)

Schools (including outdoor and environmental education centres) are required to maintain one or more adrenaline auto-injectors as part of their first aid kit/s. The number will depend on the number of students with a medical diagnosis of severe allergy, the size and layout of the school and range of school activities. Schools should also consider the size and weight of the students to determine if auto-injector/s with lower dosage may be required (e.g. EpiPen Jr® for students 10 to 20 kg) to meet the needs of their student population.

The adrenaline auto-injector would be for general use, in the event that an additional dose of adrenaline is required after the administration of the student/staff members' own prescribed device, or a misfire, or in the event of a first time presentation of anaphylaxis of a previously undiagnosed individual student, staff or visitor.



For information on how to purchase adrenaline auto-injectors for school use, refer to <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/anaphylaxis.html>

Asthma Reliever/Puffer (General Use for First Aid Kit)

The asthma reliever is for use in the event of a first time presentation of asthma of a previously undiagnosed student, staff or visitor or in the event the person(s) own prescribed device is not available or operating.

Queensland state schools are required to have staff trained in an approved asthma management course, and only trained staff will be able to purchase and administer asthma medication for first aid purposes. [Queensland Health's Fact Sheet](#) provides further information regarding the use of blue/grey reliever medication to provide asthma first aid at schools, workplaces and community events.

Principals will be required, as part of a risk management process, to:

- either negotiate a Queensland Health approved [Asthma management course](#) for staff to access or contact the local [State Schools Registered Nurse](#) (SSRN) to discuss training options in their local area
- determine the range and number of staff to be trained, e.g. classroom teacher/s of student/s with asthma, first aid officer/s, staff member/s authorised to administer routine medications
- nominate trained staff to purchase, access or administer asthma medication in emergency situations.

A number of general first aid courses include the required asthma management learning objectives within the regular course content; however, specialised asthma management training is suggested for schools that have students diagnosed with asthma.

Use of spacers for administering asthma medication

Contemporary asthma first aid procedure includes the use of a clear, plastic container known as a 'spacer' to assist in the administration of blue reliever medication, as this device enables more effective inhalation of the medication into the lungs.

Schools should include a single use spacer in the first aid kit with the school's asthma medication for use in an emergency, or where the patient's prescribed medication and spacer are unavailable. Once used, the spacer should be disposed of and replaced with a fresh spacer.



Student-specific emergency medications

Some students with specialised health needs may require the administration of emergency medications which require specialist training beyond that provided in first aid training, e.g. Midazolam for the emergency treatment of a seizure. The administration of these emergency medications varies in complexity and may or may not be within the capacity of education staff to administer.

To determine the safest option to manage risks to the student's health, the school should seek advice from their local [State Schools Registered Nurse](#) to:

- provide general advice to staff on the administration of the student's emergency medication
- explain issues associated with administering medication in an emergency
- discuss the level of training and re-training required to develop required competencies, especially if administration is likely to be infrequently
- identify local factors which may impinge on rapid access to medication (e.g. distance from emergency services to the school).

The principal/staff member will determine if administering the emergency medication (apart from first aid emergency medications) would provide a level of care that could reasonably be expected of a school, taking into account the health needs of the individual student requiring support, the skills and knowledge of the school's staff, and the resources available from within the school and local community.

There may be some instances when schools do not have staff that are able to provide the level of care required to support the student's medical needs in a medical emergency. For example, it may not be possible in the school environment to administer health procedures where the safest course of action for the student would be for medically trained staff to administer medication, if relevant medically trained staff are not present at the school on a full-time or regular basis.

If the school has close access to emergency services, the principal/delegated officer may determine, in the best interests of the student, that a student's emergency medication (other than first aid emergency medications) should be administered by ambulance or paramedic services who have the appropriate training and experience in administering more complex emergency medications. In these circumstances, the school should consult with their local emergency services and jointly plan for this emergency event.

All decisions regarding the option taken by the school should be in the best interests of the student, and would need to consider the capability and willingness of staff members to volunteer to perform a clinical/medical/health care response in a crisis situation. In these circumstances, the principal will work

with the parent/carer, the treating health team and Regional staff to determine how best to plan the most appropriate course of action.

Self-administration of medications

Contemporary management of chronic health conditions encourages students to recognise the signs and symptoms of their condition and administer their own prescribed medication, in order to participate in the full range of activities offered by the school.

In schools, self-administration may apply to students who are assessed by their parents/carers as capable and approved by the principal as appropriate. Even where a student is competent at self-administering medication, the principal should also consider and assess any additional associated risks at the local school level in determining if it is safe for the student to self-medicate and additional safeguards may need to be enacted.



Example of asthma medication with spacer

Self-administration of routine medications

Some students require routine administration of medications to manage their health condition. These may include:

- monitoring blood glucose levels and the injection of insulin for diabetes
- inhaling preventative reliever medication such as Ventolin® for asthma
- orally administering anti-convulsant medication for epilepsy
- orally administering enzyme replacements for cystic fibrosis
- applying medicated ointment to the skin.



Example of blood glucose

Teachers can assist students to manage their health condition by incorporating their medication needs in the routine management of the class and school.

The school must take into consideration the student's confidentiality and privacy.

The principal will not approve students who require Ritalin or Dexamphetamine (or other controlled drugs) to keep their medications on their person in order to self-medicate, as these medications must be stored securely in a locked cabinet when not being administered.

Self-administration of emergency medications

Some emergency medications, e.g. Ventolin® (for asthma) and adrenaline (for anaphylaxis), are available in easy-to-use devices, which enable rapid administration by non-medical personnel. Instructions to administer these medications are available in the students' Asthma Action Plan or Anaphylaxis Action Plan, which should be kept with the medication at all times.

The parent/carer may authorise for an older or more independent student with asthma or severe allergies at risk of anaphylaxis to carry their own emergency medication.

However, this does not negate the need for staff supervising students with these potentially life-threatening health conditions to be trained to administer the medication if the student is unable to do so.



Example of student's

No student should be expected to be fully responsible for self-administration of their emergency medication if they require it, as their symptoms may compromise their ability to do so.

Students may self-administer their emergency medication under the following conditions:

- The student (if considered to be Gillick Competent¹) or parents/carers have confirmed with the school that the student can carry their own medication at all times safely and securely.
- The student is able to demonstrate practices of secure storage of their medication (with their Action Plan).
- The student keeps their medication in-date.
- Staff are aware of students who are carrying emergency medication.
- Staff who supervise the student are familiar with their warning signs (as per their Action Plan) and are trained to administer their emergency medication if the student is unable to do so.

The principal should also assess any associated risks at the school level in making this determination.

For students with specialised health conditions (other than asthma and anaphylaxis) who may require emergency medication, consultation with the student's treating team, parents and the State Schools Registered Nurse will determine if self-administration is an option. If so, requirements will be documented in the student's Emergency Health Plan.

School record of self-administration of asthma medication

As asthma is a common childhood health condition requiring basic oral medication, many students are capable of self-administering their own medication without adult support or supervision.

On enrolment or at time of diagnosis, a parent can advise the school that their child has the capacity to confidently, competently and safely administer the right dose of their own asthma medication at the right times and can store their medication securely.

The student enrolment/information officer will note/update the student's OneSchool medical records to reflect the parent's decision by selecting:

Student details → Medical → Edit → Add new Medical Condition Details → select 'Asthma – student self-administers (No Action Plan required. School will administer Asthma First Aid in an emergency.)'

The school only needs a copy of a student's Asthma Action Plan if staff are administering or supporting the student to administer their asthma medication, or if their emergency response is complex (e.g. student requires several medications).

School record of self-administration of medications

Where it has been determined that the student can self-administer their medication, (with the exception of asthma medication where only parent/carer approval is required), the principal:

- should make a record of any discussions with the parent and student in OneSchool, as a record of contact;
- should ensure that the decision to allow the student to self-administer is recorded in OneSchool → under the *Manage Student Details* → edit *Medical Conditions* → add a comment in the *Management* field (e.g. student self-administers insulin as required). Once entered, this information should be visible in the *Student Profile Additional Information* section.

Appendix 4

Confirming medication has been prescribed

To administer medication to students during school or school-related activities, schools require the medication to be prescribed, which constitutes medical authorisation.

Schools can confirm that medication has been prescribed by checking that:

- the original packaging is labelled ‘Prescription only’ or ‘Controlled drug’ (as these medications can only be sold by pharmacists on a medical practitioner’s prescription); and/or
- the pharmacy label on the student’s medication includes the medical practitioner’s name (See Diagram 1).

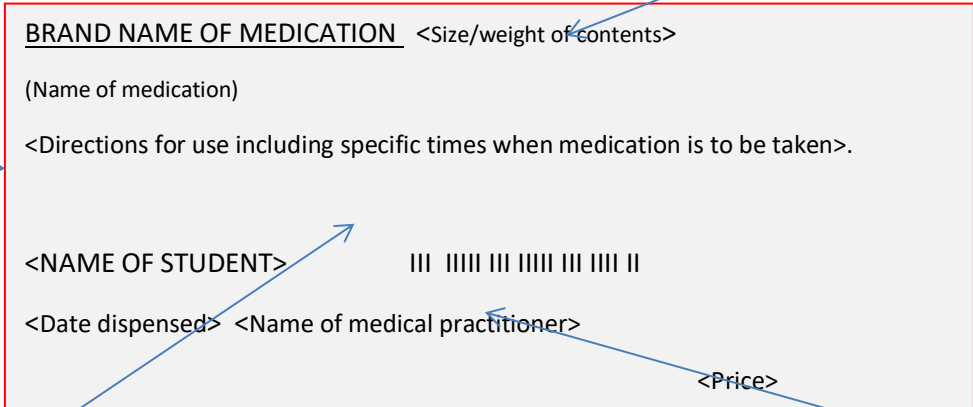


Example of prescription only packaging

Diagram 1. Pharmacy label check

1. Does the name of student match the student to whom it is to be administered?

2. Does the name of the medication match with the written advice from the parent/medical practitioner?



3. Is a medical practitioner listed on the label to confirm that it has been prescribed?

4. If the medical practitioner is not listed on the label, contact the pharmacist to confirm that this medication has been prescribed to the student by a medical practitioner and is not an un-prescribed over-the-

In some instances, a pharmacist may dispense prescribed medication in more than one box, but not label all boxes. In this case, a parent should request extra prescription labels to be printed by the pharmacist, as only labelled medication will be administered by the school.

Staff administer medications that are essential for the student's health. Where a school is concerned that the medication may not have been prescribed and is an OTC medication, e.g. the label does not include the name of the medical practitioner and the school has no other evidence that the medication has been prescribed (e.g. letter from the medical practitioner), the school may phone the pharmacist who dispensed the medication (named on the label) to confirm that it has been prescribed by a medical practitioner.



In the event that the pharmacist will not disclose if the medication is prescribed, the school should advise the parent that they cannot administer the medication without written authority from the student's medication practitioner.

A letter from the parent to administer medication will not suffice if medical authorisation cannot be confirmed. The parent should be advised that until medical authorisation can be confirmed, if they wish their child to receive medication during school hours, they will have to attend the school to take the responsibility for its administration.

Further information about medicine labelling is available at <http://www.nps.org.au/topics/how-to-be-medicinewise/regulation-clinical-trials/medicine-schedules-availability>