

Medication Administration Policy

Policy Statement

Administering medication is considered a high risk practice. Authority must be obtained from a parent or legal guardian before educators administer any medication (prescribed or non-prescribed)

Families place a high level of trust and responsibility on our services when educators are administering medication to children or observing older children self-administer.

All practices regarding medications are to meet legislative requirements and our services will seek additional medical advice or opinion if and when needed.

The Administration of Medication Policy reflects the following principles:

- Safe practices to administer medication
- Appropriate hygiene practices
- Attention to detail
- Maintenance of accurate records
- First aid qualifications
- Licensing and legislative requirements
- Recommended advice and practices from a medical source
- Open communication between educators, families and children
- Accountability of educators when administering medication

The basic principles of medication administration will be adhered to at all times in our services. The six principles are:

1. The right child
2. The right medication
3. The correct dose
4. The correct method
5. Recording of date and time
6. Expiry date of the medication

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Chapter 4: Operational Requirements

Division 3: Medical Conditions Policy

- Regulation 90: Medical conditions policy
- Regulation 91: Medical conditions policy to be provided to parent

Division 4: Administration of Medication

- Regulation 92: Medication record

- Regulation 93: Administration of medication
- Regulation 94: Exceptions to authorisation requirement – anaphylaxis or asthma emergency
- Regulation 95: Procedure for administration of medication
- Regulation 96: Self-administration of medication

National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted

- Element 2.1.1: Each child's health needs are promoted

Strategies and Practices

Definition of medication

- The term 'medication' can be defined either as prescribed or non-prescribed. For the purpose of this policy, 'prescribed' medication is:
 - Authorised by a health care professional
 - Dispensed by a pharmacist with a printed label, which includes the name of the child being prescribed the medication, the medication dosage and expiry date
- All medication that does not meet the criteria for prescribed medication, will be considered non-prescribed. This includes over-the-counter medication, medication dispensed by a naturopath/homeopath or medicines considered complementary or alternative such as vitamins and cultural herbs or remedies

Administration of medication

Administering medication to children at the request of their parents is a task that requires attention to detail, meticulous record keeping and team work. It is a responsibility that must be taken seriously, due to the potential health risks and litigation issues that may arise as a result of incorrect administration (National Health Medical Research Council)

- Medication is not to be administered to a child unless the administration is authorised and that the medication is administered in accordance with regulation 95 or 96
- Medication can only be administered when the service's medication authorisation form has been completed and signed by the child's parent or legal guardian or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication

- The administration of medication to a child is authorised if an authorisation to administer medication:
 - Is recorded on the service medication authorisation form or
 - In the case of an emergency, is given verbally by a parent/guardian or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication or
 - If a parent or person named in the enrolment record cannot reasonably be contacted in the circumstances, a registered medical practitioner or an emergency service
- Our services reserve the right to contact a health care professional if educators are unsure about administering medication to a child, even if the parent or legal guardian has requested the medication to be administered

Exception to authorisation requirement – Anaphylaxis or Asthma emergency

- Medication may be administered to a child without an authorisation in the case of an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency
- If medication is administered in the case of an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency the parent and emergency services are to be notified as soon as practicable

Medication authorisation form

Families must complete the medication authority form before any medication can be given. The form includes the following:

- Name of child who requires the medication
- Authorisation to administer, including if applicable self administration signed by a parent or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication
- Name of the medication to be administered
- The time and date the medication was last administered
- The time and date, or the circumstances under which the medication should next be administered
- The dosage of the medication to be administered
- The manner in which the medication is to be administered

If the medication is administered to the child:

- The dosage that was administered
- The manner in which the medication was administered
- The time and date the medication was administered
- The name and signature of the person who administered the medication
- If another person was required under regulation 95 to check the dosage and administration, the name and signature of that person

Procedure for administration of medication

If medication is administered to a child by an educator or self administered by a child, the medication must be administered:

- When prescribed by a medical practitioner:- From its original container, bearing the original label with the name of the child to whom the medication is to be administered and before the expiry or use by date
- When over the counter medication:- From its original container, bearing the original label and instructions and before the expiry or use by date
- The medication must be administered in accordance with any instructions that are attached to the medication or are written or verbal instructions provided by a registered medical practitioner
- For School Holiday Program the following must be checked by a person other than the person administering the medication:
 - The dosage of the medication to be administered
 - The identity of the child to whom the medication is to be administered

Self administration of medication or health procedures (school aged children only)

A school aged child may be permitted to self administer medication or self manage a health procedure in line with the following conditions:

- An authorisation for the child to self administer medication is recorded on the medication authorisation form and/or the enrolment form.
- A written authorisation has been received from a parent/legal guardian authorising the child to self manage a health procedure eg. Monitoring blood glucose levels and the injection of insulin as required
- Children can self administer or self manage in a safe and hygienic manner
- There is to be a risk assessment in place for the service which includes:
 - A plan of action in the event of an adverse reaction to the medication or health procedure
 - Practices relating to the secure storage of medication or health procedure items that may be potentially harmful to other children
 - Practices relating to the safe disposal of sharps and equipment

- Educators will supervise the self administration of medication and the self management of a health procedure by children where possible. Situations where this may not be possible would be the immediate need for an inhaler or adrenaline auto – injector such as EpiPen or Anapen etc.
- Educators will document all occasions of self administration of medication by a school child on the self administered medication form and request the parent to sign the form when collecting their child
- Educators will document all occasions of self management of a health procedure by a school child in a mutually agreeable way and request the parent to acknowledge the self management via signing the documentation when collecting their child

Restrictions on administering medication

Home remedies, naturopathic medicines

- The Royal Children’s Hospital does not endorse the use of naturopathic, herbal or home remedy medicines as there are no regulations, policies or standards in place on the ingredients of such medicines, therefore;
 - Home remedies and naturopathic medicines are not to be administered by educators

Over the counter medication

- Over the counter medication may be administered for three (3) consecutive days. Further days of administration may be provided on written authority from a Medical Practitioner
- Educators reserve the right to refuse to administer over the counter medication for the three (3) days as detailed above if they feel uncomfortable doing so and may therefore request a written authority from a Medical Practitioner to support the use of the medication

Assessing the need to administer fever reducing medication

All children will occasionally have an elevated temperature. Having a temperature is one of the most common reasons that children see a Doctor. Fever is one of the mechanisms used by the body to get rid of germs. There is some evidence that giving medications to reduce the fever can slow the body’s immune response to infection (*Staying Healthy in Child Care*; 5th edition)

Paracetamol is often given to “bring a fever down” Paracetamol is safe when given in the recommended doses; however an overdose may cause liver failure. It is therefore vital to ensure that the dosage given is correct for the weight/age of the child as directed on the bottle

Sources and further reading

- Staying healthy in child care 5th edition
- Anaphylaxis Australia - www.allergyfacts.org.au

- Asthma Foundations Australia – www.asthmaaustralia.org.au
- Immunise Australia Program – www.immunise.health.gov.au
- National Health and Medical Research Council - www.nhmrc.gov.au
- National Prescribing Service - www.nps.org.au
- Poisons Information Centre Listing. www.ausdi.hcn.net.au