

## STUDENT HEALTH CARE

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# 1 POLICY

- 1.1 The Department of Education and Training will assist students to access necessary health care while they are attending school or school-based activities.
- 1.2 The Department of Education and Training will endeavour to ensure that health care standards are met, that identified health risks are minimised and that good personal and environmental health practices are promoted.

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on principles consistent with meeting standards of health care and relevant legislative provisions:

- The health, safety and welfare of students and staff are of paramount concern.
- The Department of Education and Training staff are well informed and well prepared to manage ongoing health needs and respond to health emergencies.
- The Department of Education and Training staff are able to access advice, resources and training from parents and health professionals when planning to meet the health care needs of students.

### 2.2 RATIONALE

The Department of Education and Training is committed to the care, safety and protection of all students attending government schools. The primary purpose of health care provision in schools is to implement health practices that maintain and promote the good health of all students and staff. It is anticipated that schools will establish practices that are responsive to identified health care needs and provide teaching and learning experiences that contribute to the achievement of long-term health outcomes, including the Health and Physical Education learning outcomes.

Providing quality health care for students is a shared community responsibility. Schools have a part to play in universal health promotion thereby enabling individuals, and groups to improve their personal health through attitudinal, behavioural, social and environmental changes. Universal health promotion is generally an integral component of the school's teaching and learning program and may be best considered in the context of the Curriculum Framework, the Health Promoting Schools Framework or the *Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting K-10: Policy and Guidelines*.

The *Student Health Care* policy and procedures focus predominantly on the procedures and actions to be undertaken by a school in order to address health care or medical matters that may need management during school hours.

## **2.3 DEFINITIONS**

### **2.3.1 DEPARTMENT STAFF**

The Department of Education and Training staff are defined as persons employed by the Director General of the Department of Education and Training.

### **2.3.2 PARENTS**

Includes guardians and carers and refers to a person who at law has responsibility for the care, welfare and development of a student.

### **2.3.3 HEALTH CARE AUTHORISATION**

An agreed management plan developed by parents, the school principal and relevant staff for a student who has a medical condition or health care needs. It contains relevant medical information and describes the assistance or health care procedures that may be required whilst a student is at school.

### **2.3.4 HEALTH CARE PROCEDURE**

Health care procedures may include:

- the provision or supervision of first aid;
- the administration of medication;
- personal care such as lifting, mobility, feeding or toileting;
- monitoring the health status of a student; or
- taking action in response to a medical emergency.

### **2.3.5 HEALTH PROFESSIONAL**

A health professional provides advice and recommends appropriate management of a student's health care needs. Health professionals may include doctors, medical practitioners, pharmacists, nurses and allied health workers.

### **2.3.6 INTENSIVE HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

A student with intensive health care needs has a medical condition that requires assistance for life support and/or maintenance of health during school hours. In many circumstances intensive health care needs will require long-term management by trained Department of Education and Training staff.

### **2.3.7 MEDICAL PROCEDURE**

A complex health care procedure that can only be performed at school by authorised staff who have received training from a health professional. Medical procedures may include inserting a nasogastric tube, monitoring intravenous and/or feeding infusions, tracheotomy care, use of rectal valium or suctioning and use of a suctioning catheter.

### 2.3.8 SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

The School Health Service is provided to schools in order to promote healthy development in children and young adolescents. The School Health Service provided to government schools is jointly funded by the Department of Health and the Department of Education and Training, with school health service staff employed by the Department of Health.

### 2.3.9 STATEWIDE SPECIALIST SERVICES

Services provided to schools through the Centre for Inclusive Schooling, Hospital Schools Service, Vision Impairment Service and the WA Institute for Deaf Education.

## 3 RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR AUTHORITY

### 3.1 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

This policy, procedures and guidelines are consistent with relevant sections of the following legislation:

- *Criminal Code*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*
- *Health Act 1986*
- *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 and*
- *Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996*
- *School Education Act 1999 and*
- *School Education Regulations 2000*

### 3.2 RELEVANT POLICIES

#### 3.2.1 CURRENT DEPARTMENT POLICIES

- *Asbestos Management in Workplaces and Schools*
- *Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting K-10: Policy and Guidelines*
- *Duty of Care for Students*
- *Emergency Management*
- *Enrolment*
- *Excursions: Off School Site Activities*
- *HIV/ AIDS and Hepatitis*
- *Information Privacy and Security*
- *Occupational Safety and Health*
- *Outdoor Education and Recreation Activities*
- *Records Management Manual for School, College and Campus Records*
- *Risk Management*

### 3.2.2 RELEVANT POLICIES FROM OTHER AGENCIES

- Worksafe Western Australian Commission  
Code of Practice - First Aid Facilities and Services; Workplace Amenities and Facilities; Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment, 2002  
[www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/codewswa0229.pdf](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/codewswa0229.pdf)
- Code of Practice on the management of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis at Workplaces, 2000  
[www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/codewswa0197.pdf](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/codewswa0197.pdf)
- Department of Health  
Communicable Disease - Guidelines for teachers and local authorities and medical practitioners, 2005  
[www.population.health.wa.gov.au/communicable/resources/ACF29EA.pdf](http://www.population.health.wa.gov.au/communicable/resources/ACF29EA.pdf)
- School Head Lice Management Resource  
[www.health.wa.gov.au/headlice](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/headlice)
- Measles Information for Childcare Facilities and Schools 2005
- Meningococcal Disease Fact Sheet, 2005  
[www.population.health.wa.gov.au/Communicable/resources/Meningococcal%20Disease%20Fact%20Sheet%20May%202005.pdf](http://www.population.health.wa.gov.au/Communicable/resources/Meningococcal%20Disease%20Fact%20Sheet%20May%202005.pdf)
- Policy for the Management of School Health Records, 1991
- Guidelines for Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and the Impact of Family and Domestic Violence, 2004

### 3.2.3 MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Education and Training and Department of Health for the Provision of School Health Services for School Students Attending Government Schools 2004-07.

Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Health for the Educational Services for Western Australian Students (Hospital Schools Service).

Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Education and Training and Disability Services Commission to Clarify Goals, Roles And Responsibilities in Relation to Students With Disabilities Attending Government Schools.

## 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

### 4.1 PRINCIPALS

The principal is responsible for:

Promotion of good health outcomes:

- developing and implementing school procedures and practices that promote good health outcomes for all students;
- ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities, rights and all available management options when providing health care to students;
- ensuring appropriate personal and staff training is available for the provision of health care and emergency procedures;
- respecting staff decisions regarding provision of health care to students;
- taking action in accordance with advice provided by the Department of Health in managing communicable diseases;
- personally providing health care within their level of experience for any student in an emergency situation if professional assistance cannot be promptly accessed;
- seeking immunisation and health information about students from parents at the point of enrolment; and
- safe and confidential storage of students' health care records and Health Care Authorisations.

Managing identified health care needs of students:

- seeking information and advice from parents and health professionals to ensure that the health care needs of students are identified;
- developing a Health Care Authorisation for students when necessary, monitoring its implementation and maintaining up to date information;
- ensuring that relevant school staff are fully aware of identified health care needs of students and that the Health Care Authorisation is implemented at school and/or during off-site activities;
- assessing the training, equipment and resources required to manage identified health care needs;
- determining whether or not the intensive health care needs of a student can be met by the school;
- arranging provision of an educational program for students who are absent for more than ten school days; and
- maintaining engagement and participation of chronically ill students in an appropriate educational program.

### 4.2 DEPARTMENT STAFF

Staff are responsible for:

Promotion of good health outcomes:

- promoting health practices that maintain good health for all students in the school environment;

- monitoring the health needs of all students and meeting duty of care obligations by recognising and responding to changing health needs or accidents involving students;
- implementing agreed school procedures and practices to promote good health outcomes and maintain safety for all students;
- addressing health learning outcomes, community health promotion priorities or activities within the learning and teaching program; and
- providing essential health care for a student in an emergency situation if professional assistance cannot be promptly accessed.

Managing identified health care needs of students:

- determining whether to agree or not to agree to provide health care and/or medical procedures for identified students;
- informing the principal when they do not consider themselves to be confident to provide health care support to students;
- implementing a Health Care Authorisation for students when necessary, monitoring its implementation and maintaining up to date information;
- keeping required records about the provision of health care to students;
- participating in agreed training for the provision of health care or medical procedures, including first aid and emergency procedures;
- providing an educational program for students who are absent for more than ten school days; and
- maintaining engagement and participation of chronically ill students in an appropriate educational program under the direction of the principal.

### 4.3 PARENTS

Parents share responsibility with the school to ensure the provision of appropriate health care for their child. This includes:

- providing accurate and relevant information about their child's health history, any medical condition or health care needs at the time of enrolment and throughout their child's attendance at the school;
- advising staff if their child is bringing any medication to school and completing a Health Care Authorisation;
- providing advice about their child's health from a health professional when requested by the principal;
- providing written permission for a principal or identified staff member to be able to directly contact a health professional; and
- assisting the school to develop a Health Care Authorisation in response to identified health care needs or medical conditions.

### 4.4 STUDENTS

The Department of Education and Training encourages students to take responsibility for the management of personal health care to the extent possible dependent upon their age and the nature of their health care needs. This may include:

- following school policies, procedures and practices to promote good health outcomes and maintain safety for all students;

- undertaking personal health care or first aid procedures with the supervision and assistance of staff as required; and
- administration of his or her own medication and/or health care procedures if a medical practitioner or health professional has deemed this appropriate.

#### **4.5 STATEWIDE SPECIALIST SERVICES**

Statewide specialist services are responsible for:

- providing advice and support to school staff to support students with identified health care needs;
- contributing to educational planning for identified students; and
- facilitating staff training where this is appropriate.

#### **4.6 AREA HEALTH SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

The Area Health Services, Department of Health provide advice, services and support to schools as described in the *Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Education and Training and Department of Health 2004 – 2007*.

The provision of the School Health Service is negotiated, implemented and monitored through Local Area Service Agreements which are to be negotiated during 2005.

Area Health Services will work with schools to maximise student health and wellbeing and contribute to the achievement of learning outcomes. The School Health Service is comprised of three components, early detection, health promotion and specialist health expertise (see Appendix 3 for further information).

#### **4.7 THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

The Minister for Education and Training is vicariously liable for staff who have acted responsibly and in good faith in meeting the requirements of the Student Health Care policy and procedures and accepts legal responsibility for the actions of school staff in these circumstances (see *Duty of Care for Students* policy).

## **5 PROCEDURES**

### **5.1 OVERVIEW**

Procedures in this document address the promotion and maintenance of good health in schools and the management of immediate health care or medical needs while a student is at school.

These procedures address elements of the promotion of good health practices with students but not the development and implementation of a comprehensive health and physical education curriculum in schools.

In addition to the procedural information contained within this document, the Student Health Care page on the Department of Education and Training's website provides additional information:

<http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/studenthealthcare/health.html>

## 5.2 ENROLMENT INFORMATION REGARDING HEALTH

### 5.2.1 GENERAL PROCEDURES

In the *Enrolment* policy parents are asked to ensure that any medical conditions or health care needs are identified on the *Application for Enrolment* and the *Government School Enrolment Form*. At the time of enrolment parents need to provide accurate information regarding their child's health history and any existing medical conditions or health care needs.

Where the parent has indicated that their child has a medical condition or health care needs the principal will seek further information in order to determine what school assistance may be required for school management of the condition and the maintenance of good health.

At the time of enrolment, the principal in collaboration with parents and, where required, health professionals will undertake planning to ensure that appropriate preventative and health management practices are identified so that agreed health care procedures can be put in place to maintain good health. Health Care Authorisations need to be developed in readiness for the student commencing at the school (see section 5.4 and Appendix 1).

Information regarding each student's immunisation record, identified medical condition or health care needs must be entered onto the School Information System or any other management information system used by the school.

### 5.2.2 IMMUNISATION INFORMATION

Parents are requested to provide a record of their child's immunisation history when completing enrolment of their child at a school.

A student may not have an immunisation record or the record may be incomplete. The student may be enrolled with the parent being requested to complete the scheduled immunisations as soon as possible and/or to provide updated records to the school. For children under 7 years of age parents may request an immunisation record for their child from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (FreeCall 1800 653 890). Where a student has not been immunised the parent may provide an explanation that:

- the child cannot be immunised; or
- the parent has a personal, philosophical, religious or medical belief that immunisation should not occur.

A student who has not been immunised can be enrolled and attend the school. The enrolment form must indicate that the student has not been immunised.

The principal must provide information regarding the immunisation record of any student to the Department of Health or the School Health Service on request. This will include information about students who have not been immunised or whose immunisation record is incomplete.

## **5.3 PROMOTING GOOD HEALTH PRACTICES AND OUTCOMES**

### **5.3.1 GENERAL INFORMATION**

Schools share responsibility with parents for promoting good health practices for all students. The school environment must promote good health with every opportunity being taken to promote good health habits among students. This includes:

- development and implementation of school policies, procedures and practices that support good health outcomes;
- addressing learning area outcomes and community health promotion priorities or activities within the learning and teaching program; and
- maintaining a healthy environment to prevent, to the extent possible, the spread of infection or disease.

School staff contribute to good health of students through maintaining duty of care and taking reasonable steps in response to health care needs that may arise during the school day. Staff must take action to address a health care need of which they are aware. This includes monitoring a student's condition, seeking appropriate assistance and informing parents of what action has been taken at school and any health care needs that may need attention from parents outside school hours (see *Duty of Care for Students* policy).

### **5.3.2 PREVENTION OF INFECTION**

In promoting good hygiene practices and reducing the spread of infection schools need to establish agreed procedures that will address the following practices:

- hand washing immediately after toileting and before eating;
- preventing contact with blood or body fluids by providing equipment, such as gloves, to reduce the risk of contact or exposure;
- regularly cleaning skin or environmental surfaces to reduce the risks of contamination or transmission of infectious disease;
- avoiding the sharing of eating and drinking utensils; and
- informing parents about how to support the school in promoting good health practices and reducing transmission of infectious diseases.

### 5.3.3 PROVISION OF MINOR FIRST AID

Each school is required to have appropriate first aid facilities and staff trained in first aid procedures. The principal will ensure that:

- adequate first aid services are available and that first aid plans and procedures are developed and implemented;
- a staff member is identified to be in charge of first aid and is provided with relevant training;
- appropriate facilities are provided, including a supervised, hygienic place for sick or injured students; and
- suitably stocked first aid boxes are maintained for use at school and during off-site activities or excursions

There are some first aid or health care procedures that staff without professional first aid or health care training can provide in the same way that a parent does. Staff may indicate to a principal that they do not wish to provide such first aid or health care procedures to students. Standard precautions for the control of infection, including the control of blood-borne infections and use of recommended cleaning agents, must be followed by school staff as a matter of routine.

*The Code of Practice - First Aid Facilities and Services; Workplace Amenities and Facilities; Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment, 2002* will assist the principal to establish appropriate first aid procedures and practices on the school site and during off-site activities. For further information see:

[www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/codewswa0229.pdf](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/codewswa0229.pdf)

### 5.3.4 HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS)

Identification of children with head lice is essential to prevent person-to-person spread of head lice. The principal and staff, in consultation with the school community, will develop agreed management, communication and education strategies to promote effective management and reduce the impact of head lice infestation.

The principal may authorise a member of staff to examine the head of any student to ascertain whether head lice are present. Community Health staff are also authorised to undertake examinations.

A school policy and procedures describing involvement of parents in the management of head lice needs to be endorsed by the School Council prior to implementation by the principal. If members of the parent community are to examine the head of students at school to ascertain whether head lice are present, all members of the parent community must be informed of this strategy.

Parents must also be informed of their right to not give permission for another parent to examine their child's head. In these circumstances the principal will authorise a member of staff to perform an examination as required.

Students must be treated with sensitivity if head lice are found. They can be given tasks which do not involve close group work but do not necessarily need to be excluded from class activities for the remainder of the school day. The principal however, does have authority to exercise discretion and withdraw a student from school programs.

If head lice are present then the parents of all students in the class must be informed and requested to examine and treat their children if required. Parents must be advised that head lice elimination requires at least 10 days of follow-up treatment with daily removal of head lice.

The principal may require that a student with head lice not attend school nor participate in an educational program until the parents confirm that a recommended treatment is being undertaken and all head lice have been removed.

For further information see: [www.health.wa.gov.au/headlice](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/headlice)

### 5.3.5 SUN PROTECTION AND PROLONGED HIGH TEMPERATURE

The principal will consult with the school community to develop procedures for promoting effective sun protection. These will include:

- expecting the wearing of appropriate cover-up clothing and hats for all outdoor activities;
- limiting the amount of time students spend in the sun between 10.00am and 3.00pm where practicable; and
- addressing relevant knowledge, attitudes and skills in the teaching and learning program.

Schools will not be closed during periods of prolonged high temperature. Principals must ensure that teaching and learning programs and activities are modified to suit the weather conditions.

Parents may keep their child at home and provide an explanation of the absence to the school. They may also withdraw students from the school program in negotiation with school staff.

## 5.4 HEALTH CARE AUTHORISATION

### 5.4.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Where a parent indicates that their child has a medical condition or health care needs the principal will determine the nature of care that may be required at school. This includes identifying the health care practices or procedures that it is reasonable for parents to expect and for school staff to provide. Health care practices include preventative approaches to minimise risk factors and promote understanding and acceptance of a medical condition by staff and students.

A Health Care Authorisation is required for all students with identified health care needs (see Appendix 1). It is developed to assist a school to manage the following health needs of students:

- short-term responses to particular medical conditions or illnesses;
- chronic or long term medical conditions;
- intensive health care needs;
- mental health problems and severe mental disorders; or
- medical emergencies or unpredictable health care needs.

A Health Care Authorisation and associated documentation must include written information from the student's parents and, whenever possible, health professionals which:

- identifies the medical condition, physical and/or mental health care needs;
- describes possible management implications at school and during excursions or off-site activities;
- identifies the responsibilities and actions of staff in:
  - implementing agreed health care procedures, including the administration of medication;
  - responding to identified student needs;
  - supporting a student to independently manage their condition or conduct health care procedures to the extent possible;
  - responding to emergency situations; and
  - recording the health care procedures provided for the student.

The principal may seek advice from Department of Education and Training staff, the Department of Health or a health professional in addition to the information provided by parents when developing a Health Care Authorisation.

The Authorisation must be agreed to by the parents, the principal and other school staff and if relevant health professionals. It is only current for one school year.

For a student with a long-term or chronic medical condition the school review of the Health Care Authorisation may coincide with regular medical reviews by health professionals even if this is not at the commencement of the school year.

The principal must ensure that relevant staff are informed about a Health Care Authorisation for a student with a long-term or chronic medical condition at the start of each school year.

Copies of the Health Care Authorisation must be provided to parents and, where appropriate, to students. As a student becomes able to accept responsibility for maintaining their own health and independently conducting health care procedures they should also be made aware of the content of the Health Care Authorisation.

Relevant information from the Health Care Authorisation for students with intensive health care needs or those who may need emergency assistance, must be made available to all staff that may have responsibility for the student. This will include staff on duty during school breaks or those responsible for excursions or off-school site activities.

A Health Care Authorisation (see Appendix 1) contains the following sections:

- SECTION 1: Student's personal details.
- SECTION 2: Administration of medication for any student.
- SECTION 3: Health care procedures (other than administration of medication) for a student with a long or short-term medical condition.
- SECTION 4: Trained staff who will assist a student with intensive health care needs.
- SECTION 5: Medical Emergency Plan.
- SECTION 6: Agreement between the school, the parent and staff member/s about the student's Health Care Authorisation.
- SECTION 7: Treating medical practitioner or health professional information regarding school management of medical conditions and intensive health care needs.

It is not necessary for all students with health care needs or medical conditions to have a Health Care Authorisation that contains all sections.

#### 5.4.2 HEALTH CARE AUTHORISATION FOR STUDENTS WITH INTENSIVE HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Principals must determine, in advance of any Health Care Authorisation agreement for students with intensive health care needs, whether accepting responsibility for providing health care requires staff to have particular understandings or skills training in order to appropriately administer health care or medical procedures.

If a student has intensive health care needs, the health professionals who provide care for the student, the Department of Health or statewide specialist services may provide advice to the principal in addition to the information provided by parents.

When specific training is required prior to undertaking a health care or medical procedure in a Health Care Authorisation the principal must ensure that staff are informed about their responsibilities and rights, including the option of not agreeing to administer certain health care procedures (see Section 5.10).

Staff agreement to perform identified medical procedures and the training provided must be recorded in the student's Health Care Authorisation.

Emergency procedures and response strategies must be included in a Health Care Authorisation for all students with intensive health care needs.

Health Care Authorisations for some students with intensive health care needs will need to be reviewed during a school year to ensure that the medical advice and health care procedures described are accurate and current.

The principal can request that parents update information, including having a health professional confirm the ongoing appropriateness of the Health Care Authorisation, when there are significant school staff concerns about a student's health.

## **5.5 ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

### **5.5.1 GENERAL INFORMATION**

Schools are expected to comply with parent requests for their child to be supervised or assisted in the administration of medication. Parents are required to provide the school with written information about the following:

- the reason for taking medication;
- details including the name of the medication, dosage, when it must be taken and any other relevant information; and
- whether the student is able to self-medicate or if staff supervision is necessary.

Students can take responsibility for self-medication if parents advise that this is appropriate. Independent administration of medication will be dependent upon the age of the student and the nature of their health care needs. School staff are required to check that a student has taken their medication and record the student's action.

Each time a student takes medication at school a record must be made and stored as part of the student's health care records (see Section 5.8 and Appendix 2). This record is available as a word document on the Regulatory Framework.

Incorrectly labelled or out of date medication or medical equipment that is not in good working order must not be accepted for use by staff.

Individual staff members may decline to administer medication.

### **5.5.2 SHORT-TERM MEDICATION**

Short-term medication is prescribed medication that a student is required to take during school hours in response to a short-term medical condition.

Prior to the administration of medication at school Sections 1 and 2 of the Health Care Authorisation need to be completed. The other sections do not need to be completed when the administration of medication is for a short-term medical condition (see Appendix 1).

### 5.5.3 LONG-TERM MEDICATION

Long-term medication is prescribed medication that a student is required to take during school hours in response to a long-term or ongoing medical condition.

All instructions for the administration of long-term medication must be recorded as part of a student's Health Care Authorisation. Sections 1 and 2 of the authorisation must be completed prior to the administration of medication. A medical practitioner can be asked to provide advice where the dosage of prescribed medication may need to be adjusted and nominate the range of prescribed dosage which may be administered at school. Section 7 of the Health Care Authorisation needs to be completed (see Appendix 1).

Parents are subsequently responsible for providing instructions to adjust the dosage. Where the requested dosage is within the range specified by the medical practitioner staff must administer the medication accordingly.

### 5.5.4 NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

- GENERAL INFORMATION

Administration of non-prescription medication may be authorised by a health practitioner or requested by parents as part of a health care treatment or management plan. In such circumstances a Health Care Authorisation must be completed. The principal must then manage the administration of non-prescription medication as if it were a prescribed medication.

- RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

In the absence of a Health Care Authorisation, residential college staff may only administer non-prescription medication, including analgesics, to a residential student initiating a request when parents have given explicit permission.

The principal must ensure that appropriate protocols have been established, including:

- written parent consent for the provision of non-prescription medication and information regarding any restrictions to the medication that can be provided;
- processes to monitor administration;
- processes to communicate with parents if their child makes excessive requests for non-prescription medication; and
- management of student health care records.

### 5.5.5 STORAGE OF MEDICATION

As part of a Health Care Authorisation it may be agreed that an amount of medication will be stored by the school. The agreed amount of medication will be handed, by the parent or student, to an assigned school staff member for safe storage.

Medication will be stored in a lockable compartment or cupboard that can only be accessed by authorised staff unless it needs to be refrigerated or must be immediately available to a student.

Medications that are required to be refrigerated must be stored in a secure labelled container under the care of the staff member who is responsible for the student. Alternative arrangements for storing medication must be made when it is necessary for a student to have the medication immediately available.

## **5.6 MANAGING INTENSIVE HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

### **5.6.1 GENERAL INFORMATION**

Students with intensive health care needs may need attention and care related to their medical condition during the school day. The understanding of staff and other students is an important contributor to maintaining engagement with schooling and the achievement of optimal learning outcomes. All relevant health care information must be made available to staff with responsibility for a student with intensive health care needs.

Elements of the Health Care Authorisation may need to be prominently displayed to ensure that a school meets its duty of care obligations to a student. Parents need to provide informed consent about how to best communicate essential information to staff, and when appropriate other students, regarding their child's intensive health care needs and any necessary health care, medical or emergency procedures.

Staff need to record their agreement to provide health care or medical procedures in the Health Care Authorisation. Individual staff may decline to administer medication, health care or medical procedures to students with intensive health care needs. Medical procedures must only be undertaken by staff following appropriate training.

Statewide specialist services will support the provision of an appropriate education program for a student with intensive health care needs where this is negotiated as part of the student's ongoing educational program or Health Care Authorisation.

### **5.6.2 MEDICAL PROCEDURES**

Students with unstable medical conditions and/or intensive health care needs may require medical procedures to be performed promptly to preserve life. Medical procedures are complex health care procedures that would normally be carried out by a health professional or a person who has been appropriately trained. Any medical procedure and the staff authorised to undertake the procedure must be incorporated into Section 4 of the student's Health Care Authorisation (see Appendix 1).

Agreed medical procedures will only be undertaken at school in order to maintain a student's health or in response to an emergency where immediate medical assistance cannot be provided.

Staff will require prior training to ensure that, to the extent possible, a medical procedure for a student is carried out appropriately. Staff can only undertake medical procedures if they have received training and then agreed to carry out the procedure. Principals must ensure that this is documented in the Health Care Authorisation.

In all cases requiring medical procedures the principal, in consultation with the parents, relevant health professionals, district staff, the Department of Health and statewide specialist services, will determine the best means to procure appropriate support services, resources or equipment and staff training.

In rural or remote schools where health professionals are unavailable to provide training for school staff, alternative training arrangements may be authorised by a health professional who cares for the child.

### 5.6.3 EXCURSIONS AND OFF SCHOOL SITE ACTIVITIES

When an excursion or off school site activity is planned, the teacher and the parents of a child with intensive health care needs must consider the possible impact on the student. Students requiring health care procedures or medical assistance may attend excursions or off site activities provided adequate care can be provided by the staff attending the activity. Alternative agreements may be reached with the parents about accessing other suitable activities and/or health care procedures (see *Excursions: Off School Site Activities* policy).

The principal must ensure that appropriate contingency plans have been made to deal with medical emergencies involving students with intensive health care needs during an excursion or off school site activity.

The staff member in charge must have a comprehensive understanding of the Health Care Authorisation, including relevant information about how to manage intensive health care needs, provide necessary health care or medical procedures, and the emergency management plan.

## 5.7 STUDENT HEALTH CARE OR MEDICAL RECORDS

Student health care and medical records described in this policy and procedures, including Health Care Authorisations and records of the administration of health care procedures and medication, are deemed to be confidential.

Personal health information must not be disclosed nor made available for purposes other than those specified when it was collected, except with the consent of the person to whom it relates or by the authority of law.

The principal must develop procedures for dissemination of student health care information that take into account the rights of students and families to privacy, as well as the need for relevant staff to know what health care support is to be provided for a particular student.

All staff administering medication, providing health care or medical procedures for students must make a signed record of the action taken, the time and the date.

A parent may request school-based information about their child's health from the principal. The principal will determine the appropriate level of detail to report and will advise staff accordingly. Information gathered by Department of Education and Training staff for a health professional is to be provided to the parent for forwarding. Direct communication with a health professional who provides care for a student only occurs with the written permission of the parent.

## **5.8 MEDICAL EMERGENCIES AND DUTY OF CARE**

### **5.8.1 UNPREDICTABLE MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

Planning for medical emergencies at the school level is essential and will be addressed as part of a school's Risk Management Strategy. Principals must have well-developed emergency plans in place to address all known contingencies. Staff must be aware of their responsibilities under these plans (see *Risk Management* and *Emergency Management* policies).

Emergency plans will include the identification of staff responsibility for taking any necessary actions and administering first aid or health care procedures. Medical emergency situations require a different level of responsibility of staff than normal situations.

In a medical emergency staff must provide a student with assistance within their level of experience in order to prevent or reduce harm. Staff must be informed that they may breach their duty of care to a student if they were to refuse to provide assistance in a medical emergency. This applies when the staff member is reasonably aware that certain action is needed which could prevent or reduce harm being done to a student and where the staff member is able to take that action.

The staff providing emergency assistance must:

- administer first aid or health care within their level of experience;
- seek further assistance or medical advice immediately;
- ensure that assistance offered by more qualified persons is not impeded; and
- ensure that all actions taken are promptly recorded and that the principal and the parents are informed.

In a medical emergency the principal is required to seek medical attention for a student. The absence of parental instruction or consent to emergency action or a lack of instructions from a doctor will not prevent a principal seeking medical attention for a student.

In the absence of any trained staff in an emergency, the principal is required to administer first aid or health care procedures within their level of experience. This cannot be delegated to other staff.

#### **5.8.2 INFORMING PARENTS ABOUT A MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

Principals and staff do not have the requisite medical expertise to diagnose the extent of a student's injury in a medical emergency. In an emergency the principal must make every effort to contact a student's parents for advice about the action that they wish to have taken. However, medical assistance will be sought prior to advising parents if the student's medical condition is serious or life is threatened.

In the absence of parent instructions the principal is to take reasonable actions in response to a student's medical needs. This includes providing immediate assistance, calling an ambulance or seeking medical attention from a medical practitioner. Calling an ambulance is an appropriate action if parents cannot be contacted to take responsibility for their child.

#### **5.8.3 TRANSPORTING STUDENTS IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

If transport of a student by ambulance is not available, the principal is obliged to arrange for themselves or a Department of Education and Training staff member to transport a student to a health service or medical practitioner. Advice from the ambulance service needs to be sought prior to providing transport in a private vehicle. Two people must travel with the student, one to drive and the other to monitor the health of the student.

Transport of students is not permitted in a private or Government vehicle driven by Community Health staff. Community Health staff may accompany a student in a vehicle driven by a Department of Education and Training staff member in order to manage and monitor the health of the student.

The student needs to be accompanied by a Department of Education and Training staff member who will stay with them at the medical facility until the parents arrive to take responsibility for their child.

#### **5.8.4 MEDICAL EMERGENCIES FOR STUDENTS WITH INTENSIVE HEALTH NEEDS**

Where a student has intensive health care needs, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide the school with adequate information, including medical advice on the specific actions to be taken in an emergency.

Development of an agreed medical emergency plan, as a part of the Health Care Authorisation, must involve the principal, relevant staff, parents and health professionals.

In addition to the procedures described above, staff responding to an emergency need to check that administration of medication or the undertaking of a health care or medical procedure is in accordance with the directions in the Health Care Authorisation. This information must be cross-checked with a second adult where practicable.

If trained staff cannot be accessed to administer a medical procedure then another member of staff may provide assistance within their level of experience which could prevent or reduce further harm being done to a student. In the absence of any trained staff in an emergency, the principal will administer necessary health care or medical procedures within their level of experience. This cannot be delegated to other staff.

## **5.9 MANAGING COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

### **5.9.1 GENERAL INFORMATION**

The *Communicable Disease Guidelines for Teachers, Child Care Workers, Local Government Authorities and Medical Practitioners* describes the action to be taken by the principal when managing communicable diseases. This includes procedures for excluding students with communicable diseases or school contacts of these students.

The principal or an authorised staff member must inform the local Population Health Unit staff when the *Communicable Disease Guidelines* include a notification requirement (see Appendix 4).

The local Population Health Unit staff will advise the principal of actions to be taken to manage the matter within the school and communication with the local school community. This will include the provision of proformas for communication with staff and parents and management strategies to be implemented by the school. The principal must not take action until provided with this advice or with a confirmation of diagnosis by the Department of Health.

The principal may require a student not to attend school if the local Population Health Unit staff or a registered medical practitioner advises that the student is suffering from a medical condition that is infectious, contagious or otherwise harmful to the health of persons at the school. A student may be required to have a medical or physical examination by a medical officer or nurse to determine readiness to recommence school.

### **5.9.2 MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE, MEASLES, HEPATITIS A**

Cases of suspected meningococcal disease, measles, or hepatitis A among students or staff must immediately be reported to the local Population Health Unit (see Appendix 4).

No further action or communication with staff or parents is to be taken without consultation and advice from the local Population Health Unit staff.

## 5.10 STAFF TRAINING

The *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* requires the employer to provide employees with such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to enable them to perform their work. The principal will ensure that an adequate number of staff have first aid training in order to provide health care to students although this is not essential for supervising administration of medication nor provision of minor first aid.

It is important that staff are provided with appropriate training so that they are confident when providing agreed health care and/or medical procedures for students with medical conditions. Such health care training may be general (e.g. the provision of first aid), or very specific (e.g. intermittent clean catheterisation). It may be simple (e.g. diet monitoring) or highly technical (e.g. resuscitation).

The principal must provide access to appropriate training for relevant staff in all health care or medical procedures identified as part of Health Care Authorisations for students at the school. Individual staff may decline to be trained to administer health care and/or medical procedures to students.

6 EFFECTIVE DATE 1 July 2005

7 REVIEW DATE 1 July 2007

## 8 KEY SEARCH WORDS

Health, care, medical condition, health care procedure, medical procedure, intensive health care needs, Health Care Authorisation, first aid, infection, immunisation, medical emergency, health practices, contagious, communicable, disease, medication, excursion, student, administration, temperature, head, lice, infection, prevention, parent, staff, training, services, metropolitan, regional, schools, short-term, storage, pediculous, sun, protection, measles, meningococcal, medical, records, hepatitis, administer, resuscitation, public, unit.

HEALTH CARE AUTHORISATION

**SECTION 1 Student's Personal Details**

**Student's Name:** (surname) \_\_\_\_\_ (other names) \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** M / F

**Year Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical condition:** (name)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 2 Administration of Medication**

Name of Medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this prescribed medication: Yes / No                      Dose \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date of medication

Commencement date  
of medication

Conclusion date  
of medication

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Administration instructions (this may be a copy of the pharmacists' label) \_\_\_\_\_

Is the student able to self-administer the medication? Yes / No

If not, how will the student be supported by school staff? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date for review: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ For long-term administration of medication the medical practitioner may advise that the medication needs to be reviewed more frequently.

How will the medication be stored if a supply is provided to the school? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Information**

I (parent) \_\_\_\_\_ wish to inform the school that my child (name of student) \_\_\_\_\_ will be taking the above mentioned medication whilst at school and request the support of the school as indicated above.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 3 Health care procedures (other than administration of medication) for a student with a long or short-term medical condition**

Name of condition \_\_\_\_\_

What health care procedures are required? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Names of staff responsible for implementation of the procedures? \_\_\_\_\_

Review date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 4 Trained staff who will assist a student with intensive health care needs**

Name of staff member: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Health Care procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Training provided by: \_\_\_\_\_

Retraining due: (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of staff member: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Health Care procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Training provided by: \_\_\_\_\_

Retraining due: (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

Review date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address each excursion and/or off school site activity as required in the *Excursions: Off School Site Activities* policy.

**SECTION 5 Medical Emergency Plan for \_\_\_\_\_**

**Emergency Contacts**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Doctor**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Action to be taken in an emergency:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Names of staff responsible for taking action:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Attach additional information to plan if required*

**Emergency transport requirements:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**In an emergency transport by ambulance will be requested by the principal.**

**Ambulance cover:** Yes / No

**Medic Alert number if applicable:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Telephone: (08) 9334 1234**

Review date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 6 Agreement between the school principal, the parent and staff member/s about the student's Health Care Authorisation**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year Level** \_\_\_\_\_

Current for the school year: \_\_\_\_\_

*The following signatories agree to participate in the implementation of this Health Care Authorisation which provides for:*

- *maintaining health of the student during the school day; and*
- *providing health care for the student in emergency situations.*

*The agreement authorises the school staff to follow the advice of the student's parents and medical practitioner as set out in the Health Care Authorisation. It is valid only for the year indicated and will need to be updated each year, or earlier if there is a change in the student's health necessitating a change to the Health Care Authorisation.*

**Signature of Parent** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Principal** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Signatures of Staff Member(s)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

*Is this Health Care Authorisation to be shared with all staff? Yes / No*

*If "NO" and the information is to be restricted, who will be informed?*

**SECTION 7 Treating medical practitioner or health professional information regarding school management of medical conditions and intensive health care needs**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year level:** \_\_\_\_\_

The information from the medical practitioner or health professional provides instructions to enable the school to maintain duty of care and respond to health care needs during school hours.

**Medical condition:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Health care procedures:**

Health care procedures required and instruction for administration of these procedures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is the student able to manage the procedure independently? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If the student can manage independently what support is the school to offer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Administration of medication:**

Does the student require the administration of medication during school hours? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

What is the usual dose for the student? \_\_\_\_\_

If the medication dosage is to vary, what is the minimum and maximum dosage range that the school can administer?

Minimum: \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum: \_\_\_\_\_

Symptoms of over dosage and/or over treatment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**When to seek medical assistance for the student:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Review date recommended: \_\_\_\_\_

I verify that I have read this Health Care Authorisation and agree with the school management described.

**Health professional name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

The School Health Service is comprised of three components early detection, health promotion and specialist health expertise:

### **Early Detection**

Early detection is a system for identifying health problems and difficulties at an early stage so that appropriate preventive or management strategies can be instituted. The programs can be either universal and/or targeted depending upon local need and developmental stage of the child.

Early detection of developmental difficulties can occur in various settings including the school and may involve a range of professionals who deal with the child. There are multiple opportunities during the school years for developmental problems and difficulties to be detected.

Community Health staff can support the early detection of health concerns through standardised screening programs; however early detection often occurs informally by teachers, parents or other professionals who interact with the child. Where there are concerns about a child's development Community Health staff can assist with appropriate screening and/or referral.

### **Health Promotion**

Health promotion is *"the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health"* where health is viewed not just the absence of disease but as a positive concept incorporating social, personal, and physical capacities (WHO, 1986).

Community Health Staff when working in the school setting can participate in the development and implementation of universal and/or targeted health promotion programs and contribute to health planning and policy development in a number of ways.

### **Specialist Health Expertise**

The range of health professionals who may be working in the school setting include nurses, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers. Community Health Nurses and other health professionals bring to the school setting a range of specialist skills.

Community Health Staff can assist with the development of Health Care Authorisation plans for students with specific health needs, provide expert health skills and knowledge for school staff through training and information, provide a referral pathway to other health professionals for students and can liaise with other external health care providers when necessary.

Reference: World Health Organisation (1986). Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. WHO, Geneva

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH  
UNITS

CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS

Contact the Public Health Nurses for information and advice regarding notifiable or other communicable diseases, immunisation and infection control issues.

- Albany (08) 9842 7500
- Broome (08) 9194 1643
- Bunbury (08) 9792 2500
- Carnarvon (08) 9941 0560
- East Metropolitan – East Perth (08) 9224 1625
- Geraldton (08) 9956 1985
- Kalgoorlie (08) 9021 2622
- North Metropolitan – Mirrabooka (08) 9345 7100
- Northam (08) 9622 4320
- Port Hedland (08) 9140 2377
- South Metropolitan – Fremantle (08) 9431 0200