

# COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES ABOUT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS POLICY

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Best Practice – Quality Area 2

## PURPOSE

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten, as part of our duty of care for staff, children and visitors need to ensure that a safe environment is provided. To do this we need to set out how we will manage the health of our staff, children and visitors where they have medical conditions requiring our assistance.

This policy will provide guidelines for Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten to ensure that:

- clear procedures exist to support the health, wellbeing and inclusion of all children enrolled at the service
- service practices support the enrolment of children and families with specific health care requirements
- there is effective communication about the management of the health of children enrolled at ANMK and visitors where they have medical conditions requiring our assistance.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. VALUES

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten aims to support all aspects of a child's individual health and wellbeing. We recognise being healthy contributes to a child's learning and assists a child to become an effective and involved learner. Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten aims to provide an environment that has a positive impact on each child's health, assisting them to be confident and involved learners about their individual health needs, so they are able to contribute to and connect with their own health and well being. Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten recognises each child's cultural and social identity and that children can have specific health requirements that may change over time. Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten staff members are aware of each child's health requirements and work in partnership with each child and their family, medical professionals and other professionals or organisations, when appropriate, to meet these requirements.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten, including during offsite excursions and activities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- *Anaphylaxis Policy*
- *Asthma Policy*
- *Diabetes Policy*
- *Epilepsy Policy*
- *Medical Conditions Policy*

### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

#### Background

An approved service must have a policy for managing medical conditions that includes the practices to be followed:

- in the management of medical conditions

- when parents are required to provide a medical management plan if an enrolled child has a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition
- when developing a risk minimisation plan in consultation with the child's parents/guardians
- when developing a communication plan for staff members and parents/guardians.

Staff members and volunteers must be informed about the practices to be followed. If a child enrolled at the service has a specific health care need, allergy or other relevant medical condition, parents/guardians must be provided with a copy of this and other relevant policies.

### Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 173
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 90, 91, 96
- *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic)
- *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 supported
    - Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management
  - Standard 7.1: Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community
    - Element 7.1.2: The induction of educators, co-ordinators and staff members is comprehensive
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic)
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009* (Vic)

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – ComLaw: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>

## 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**AV How to Call Card:** A card that the service has completed containing all the information that Ambulance Victoria will request when phoned. A sample card can be downloaded from: <http://www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/Education/Calling-Triple-0.html>

**Communication plan:** A plan that forms part of the policy and outlines how the service will communicate with parents/guardians and staff in relation to the policy. The communication plan also describes how parents/guardians and staff will be informed about risk minimisation plans and emergency procedures to be followed when a child diagnosed as at risk of any medical condition such as anaphylaxis is enrolled at the service.

**Medical condition:** In accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, the term medical condition includes asthma, diabetes or a diagnosis that a child is at risk of anaphylaxis, and the management of such conditions.

**Medical management plan:** A document that has been prepared and signed by a doctor that describes symptoms, causes, clear instructions on action and treatment for the child's specific medical condition, and includes the child's name and a photograph of the child. An example of this is the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCI) Action Plan.

**Risk minimisation:** The implementation of a range of strategies to reduce the risk of an adverse affect from the mismanagement of a specific medical condition at the service.

**Risk minimisation plan:** A service-specific plan that details each child's medical condition, and identifies the risks of the medical condition and practical strategies to minimise those risks, and who is responsible for implementing the strategies. The risk minimisation plan should be developed by families of children with specific medical conditions that require medical management plans, in consultation with staff at the service upon enrolment or diagnosis of the condition.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5<sup>th</sup> edition, 2013) National Health and Medical Research Council:  
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ch55>
- *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, p 62: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

## **Service policies**

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Anaphylaxis Policy*
- *Asthma Policy*
- *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- *Diabetes Policy*
- *Epilepsy Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

## **PROCEDURES**

### **The Approved Provider is responsible for:**

- ensuring that all staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within
- a copy of this policy is made available to volunteers
- developing and implementing a communication plan and encouraging ongoing communication between parents/guardians and staff regarding the current status of the child's specific health care need, allergy or other relevant medical condition, this policy and its implementation
- ensuring educators/staff receive regular training in managing the specific health care needs of children at the service including asthma, anaphylaxis, diabetes, epilepsy and other medical conditions. This includes training in the management of specific procedures that are required to be carried out for the child's wellbeing
- ensuring at least one educator/staff member who has current accredited training in emergency management requirements for specific medical conditions is in attendance and immediately available at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service
- establishing robust induction procedures that include the provision of information regarding the implementation of the practices outlined in this policy
- ensuring families and educators/staff understand and acknowledge each other's responsibilities under these guidelines
- ensuring families provide information on their child's health, medications, allergies, their medical practitioner's name, address and phone number, emergency contact names and phone numbers, and a medical management plan signed by their medical practitioner, following enrolment and prior to the child commencing at the service
- ensuring that a risk minimisation plan is developed for each child with specific medical conditions on enrolment or upon diagnosis, and that the plan is reviewed at least annually
- ensuring that parents/guardians who are enrolling a child with specific health care needs are provided with a copy of this and other relevant service policies.

### **The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

- implementing this policy at the service and ensuring that all educators/staff follow the policy and procedures set out within
- informing the Approved Provider of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy
- ensuring that the *AV How to Call Card* (refer to *Definitions*) is displayed near all telephones

- identifying specific training needs of educators/staff who work with children diagnosed with a medical condition, and ensuring, in consultation with the Approved Provider, that educators/staff access appropriate training
- ensuring a copy of the child's medical management plan is visible and known to staff in the service. Prior to displaying the medical management plan, the Nominated Supervisor must explain to parents/guardians the need to display the plan for the purpose of the child's safety and obtain their consent (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)
- ensuring educators and other staff follow each child's risk minimisation plan and medical management plan
- providing information to the community about resources and support for managing specific medical conditions while respecting the privacy of families enrolled at the service
- administering medications as required, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *Administration of Medication Policy*
- maintaining ongoing communication between educators/staff and parents/guardians in accordance with the strategies identified in the communication plan, to ensure current information is shared about specific medical conditions within the service.

**Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:**

- communicating any relevant information provided by parents/guardians regarding their child's medical condition to the Nominated Supervisor to ensure all information held by the service is current
- being aware of individual requirements of children with specific medical conditions and following their risk minimisation plan and medical management plan
- monitoring signs and symptoms of specific medical conditions and communicating any concerns to the Nominated Supervisor
- informing the Nominated Supervisor of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- informing the service of their child's medical conditions, if any, and informing the service of any specific requirements that their child may have in relation to their medical condition
- developing a risk minimisation plan with the Nominated Supervisor and/or other relevant staff members at the service
- providing a medical management plan signed by a medical practitioner, either on enrolment or immediately upon diagnosis of an ongoing medical condition. This medical management plan must include a current photo of the child and must clearly outline procedures to be followed by educators/staff in the event of an incident relating to the child's specific health care needs
- notifying the Nominated Supervisor of any changes to the status of their child's medical condition and providing a new medical management plan in accordance with these changes
- informing the Nominated Supervisor of any issues that impact on the implementation of this policy by the service.

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

## PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO ALFRED NUTTALL MEMORIAL KINDERGARTEN

- a) Informing all parents of the *Medical Conditions Policy* and any other relevant policies
- b) When ANMK staff members are made aware of a child's specific health care need, allergy or other relevant condition parents are made aware that the ANMK Policy *Medical Conditions Policy and any other relevant policy* is available to the parents of the child concerned via the website and a hard copy located in the foyer of the Kindergarten.
- c) ANMK conducts an annual information evening for enrolling families. During the information session, there is discussion of the ANMK *Medical Conditions Policy* and parents/guardians are invited to ask questions.
- d) The medical policies are included in the hard copy folder located in the parent library and also available on the website. Parents will acknowledge their awareness of how they can access the policies on their child's enrolment form
- e) When a child is registered at the kindergarten, a consent form must be signed by the parent and/or guardians, giving kindergarten staff the authority to handle medical emergencies and/or call an ambulance.
- f) Accidents/Injuries are classified as major or minor. If a major accident/injury occurs, staff will render appropriate immediate first aid treatment and will attempt to ring the parents or emergency contact. If required, staff will seek treatment either by a local doctor or a hospital/ambulance. If a minor accident/injury occurs, staff will offer appropriate first aid treatment Staff members will notify parents and/or guardians on arrival at the centre or contact them by telephone if they do not collect the child that day.
- If a head injury requiring first aid treatment occurs, staff members will, as soon as practicable, notify parents. Parents will be asked to collect their child if their child has suffered a moderate to severe head injury. Symptoms as advised via the RCH website include :
- Loss of consciousness
  - Visual disturbance
  - Is drowsy and does not respond to your voice
  - Has other significant head injury signs, such as unequally sized pupils or arm and leg weakness
  - Has something stuck in their head
  - Has confusion or loss of orientation to time, person or place, or memory loss
  - Has vomited
  - Has a persistent or recurring headache
  - May have had a brief seizure, convulsion or fit straight after the head injury
  - May have a large bruise, lump or cut on the head
- g) In all cases, (staff and children) accidents are recorded in the Accident Report Book, which according to best practice is to be signed by a parent or guardian. Following an accident, kindergarten staff will examine the cause and, if at all possible, will take steps to remedy the problem.
- h) Staff will discuss the health issues of a child with families through discussion in person at pick up or drop off times or through telephone conversations, through organised parent/staff interview times and in formal support group meetings.
- i) Staff inform families of observed health concerns during (when deemed appropriate) or at the end of the session. If a child's parent or guardian is not the person who picks up the child, staff will inform the parent or guardian by telephone.
- j) Written permission via a prepared proforma is required to be given by parents/guardians to enable staff members to speak with health or early intervention professionals.

## EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- ensure that all information on display and supplied to parents/guardians regarding the management of medical conditions is current

- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil