

# Anaphylaxis Management

*The Children's Services Act 1996* was amended on 14 July 2008 to include the requirement for all licensed children's services to have an anaphylaxis management policy containing prescribed matters and to enable the making of regulations pursuant to anaphylaxis management.

*On 14 October 2008 the Children's Services Regulations 1998 were amended prescribing the matters to be included in the policy, practices and procedures for anaphylaxis management and staff training.*

## **What should be included in an anaphylaxis management policy?**

The anaphylaxis management policy requires, at a minimum, the matters described in Schedule 3 of the Children's Services Regulations 1998 (Regulations). It must refer to the specific anaphylaxis regulations and practices and procedures related to:

1. Management of anaphylaxis medical management action plans.
2. Development of risk minimisation plans.
3. Implementation of communication plans.

Services can access an anaphylaxis model policy to assist in developing a service policy at: [www.education.vic.gov.au/anaphylaxis](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/anaphylaxis).

## **What is a risk minimisation plan?**

This is a plan developed on enrolment by the proprietor with the parents of children diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis, to minimise the risk of exposure of the child to the known allergens. It will be a service wide plan that must be known by all staff caring for or educating children, relievers, cooks and those persons working under supervision, or who assist with food preparation e.g. volunteers on parent duty.

## **What is a communication plan?**

This is a plan implemented when a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis enrolls in a service to ensure that all relevant people are aware that a child 'at risk' is attending the service. It will also ensure that staff caring for or educating children can identify the child, know the location of the EpiPen® and the medical management action plan and are aware of the contents of the action plan.

## **What is an anaphylaxis medical management action plan?**

This is a plan, developed and signed by a registered medical practitioner that describes the actions that need to be taken in the event of an anaphylactic episode and the prescribed medications. Each child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis who has been prescribed an EpiPen® must have a plan that includes the medications to be given and the circumstances under which these medications would be given. The signed plan must be inserted into the child's enrolment records. A copy must also be visible to staff. It is also recommended that a copy be located with the EpiPen®, preferably in the EpiPen® kit. A copy of the medical management action plan and the EpiPen® must also be carried by a staff member accompanying the child when taken outside the premises.

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## **How will the anaphylaxis management policy be displayed or accessed?**

The policy needs to be available for inspection by children's services advisers and for all parents of children enrolled at the service. A copy of the policy must be given to the parents/guardian of children diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis.

## **Do I need to have a notice advising that there is a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis enrolled in the service?**

Yes. If a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is enrolled and attending the service, the service is required to display a notice prominently in the foyer stating that there is a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis enrolled in the service. This notice is not required to identify the child by name.

## **What training is required and who should undertake the training?**

(see also FAQ on anaphylaxis training at: [www.education.vic.gov.au/anaphylaxis](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/anaphylaxis))

There are two training requirements for staff:

- All staff members on duty whether or not a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being cared for or educated, must have undertaken training in the administration of the EpiPen® at least every 12 months and the date recorded in the staff record. This can be achieved through attendance at accredited courses or first aid training, training with an allergy expert or a suitably trained professional and/or through the self paced trainer CD Rom and trainer EpiPen® (Anaphylaxis Resource Kit). It is recommended that staff practise with the trainer EpiPen® quarterly.
- When a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is being cared for or educated at a children's service, all staff members on duty when that child is attending the service must have undertaken anaphylaxis management training that is recognised by the Secretary and that has been published in the Government Gazette. If a child 'at risk' has enrolled in the service, staff can undertake anaphylaxis management training prior to the child attending the service.

## **What courses are recognised?**

There are two recognised anaphylaxis management courses that have been accredited by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) and published in the Government Gazette. These are the Course in Anaphylaxis Awareness (21827VIC) and First Aid Management of Anaphylaxis (21659VIC). In the future, other courses may be recognised by the Secretary and these will also be published in the Government Gazette.

## **How should this training be recorded?**

The date the staff member completed the anaphylaxis management course (certificate of attainment or completion) and the date the staff member undertook EpiPen® training will be recorded in the staff member's record. Copies of the certificate can be inserted into the record.

## **How do I ensure that relievers are trained in anaphylaxis management?**

Permanent relievers attached to services can be included in staff training and are eligible for free anaphylaxis management training whether or not they are working in a service with an 'at risk' child. This will ensure that relieving staff are equipped to work in any service at any time.

Services using agency staff must ensure that relief staff provided to the service where a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is attending have undertaken accredited training.

## **Can relieving staff for children's services access free training in anaphylaxis management?**

Yes. This is available free to all relieving staff including agency staff.

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## **Can staff access 'fee for service' accredited anaphylaxis management courses?**

Yes. In some cases this may be necessary to meet the Regulations. Currently the accredited Anaphylaxis Awareness course (21827VIC) is available free to children's services staff through The Asthma Foundation of Victoria where there is a child 'at risk' enrolled in the service (contact Paula Murray on telephone (03) 9326 7088). The course has a three year currency. This course is also available on a 'fee for service' basis through some Registered Training Organisations.

The recently amended accredited course in First Aid management of Anaphylaxis (21659VIC) is also available on a 'fee for service' basis through Registered Training Organisations. This course currently has a one year currency and no pre-requisites and is recognised by the Secretary.

## **How can I anticipate the need for staff to attend training in anaphylaxis management?**

Services are advised to include a question specifically related to anaphylaxis on enrolment forms. Additionally, parents should be made aware of the regulatory requirements for all staff members caring for or educating children diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis to be appropriately trained. Where a central enrolment scheme operates, a strategy to inform services of the enrolment and/or anticipated attendance of a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis in a particular service is recommended. This will enable staff to access training before the child attends the service.

## **What happens when a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis attends the service without their EpiPen®?**

A child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis cannot attend the service without the prescribed EpiPen®. This requirement must be clearly articulated in the policy and communicated to parents/guardians at enrolment.

Services with a child enrolled and attending who has been newly diagnosed will need to ensure that staff access training immediately. Whilst every effort is being made to meet the needs of services requesting free training, in some circumstances training will need to be purchased by the service to ensure the child is protected from harm and from hazards, and that the service is in compliance with the regulations. In some instances where children 'at risk' attend services occasionally or part time, rosters can be adjusted to ensure that all staff who are trained in anaphylaxis management are on duty when that child is attending the service.

## **What is required when a child diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis is taken outside the premises by a staff member?**

The staff member accompanying the child must carry the child's anaphylaxis medication and the anaphylaxis medical management action plan. A copy of the plan should be kept with the EpiPen® kit.

## **Should the service purchase a generic EpiPen®?**

Currently the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development does not include the use of a generic EpiPen® in the anaphylaxis model policy or the Regulations. Having a generic EpiPen® would require clear guidelines for its storage, management and use by staff at the service. At a minimum, the administration of a generic EpiPen® should only be undertaken if the medical management action plan indicates that a second EpiPen® could be needed (in which case the parent/guardian should provide the second EpiPen®), or under the direction of a qualified person e.g. an ambulance officer or General Practitioner. The Department of Human Services is currently examining issues related to the use and management of generic EpiPens®.