

# Asthma Management Policy

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*Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 15% of children. It is one of the most common reasons for childhood admission to hospital. Community education and correct asthma management will assist to minimise the impact of asthma. It is generally accepted that children under the age of six do not have the skills or ability to recognise and manage their own asthma effectively. With this in mind, our Service recognises the need to educate its staff and families about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies.*

## National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety	
2.1	Each child’s health is promoted
2.2	Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children
2.3	Each child is protected

## Education and Care Services National Regulations

90	Medical conditions policy
90(1)(iv)	Medical Conditions Communication Plan
91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
92	Medication record
93	Administration of medication
94	Exception to authorisation requirement— anaphylaxis or asthma emergency
95	Procedure for administration of medication
96	Self-administration of medication

## Early Years Learning Framework

### Learning Outcome 3

Children are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others.

Educators promote continuity of children’s personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community

Educators discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all

## PURPOSE

We aim to distribute a safe and healthy environment for all children enrolled at the service and providing an environment in which all children with asthma can participate to their full potential.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the service.

## DUTY OF CARE

Our service has a legal responsibility to provide:

- a. A safe environment
- b. Adequate Supervision

Staff members including relief staff need to know enough about Asthma reactions to ensure the safety of children.

## **BACKGROUND**

Asthma is a chronic, treatable health condition affecting approximately one in 10 Australian children. It is the most common reason for childhood admission to hospital. With good asthma management, people with asthma need not restrict their daily activities. Community education assists in generating a better understanding of asthma within the community and minimising its impact.

Symptoms of asthma include wheezing, coughing (particularly at night), chest tightness, difficulty in breathing and shortness of breath, and symptoms may vary between children. It is generally accepted that children under six years of age do not have the skills and ability to recognise and manage their own asthma without adult assistance. With this in mind, our Service recognises the need to educate the staff and parents/guardians about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of children, and requires that children be protected from hazards and harm. Our Service will ensure that there is at least one educator on duty at all times who has current approved emergency asthma management training in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

We will involve all educators, families and children in regular discussions about medical conditions and general health and wellbeing throughout our curriculum. The Service will adhere to privacy and confidentiality procedures when dealing with individual health needs.

A copy of all medical conditions policies will be provided to all educators and volunteers and families of the Service. It is important that communication is open between families and educators to ensure appropriate asthma management.

It is imperative that all educators and volunteers at the Service follow a child's Medical Management Plan in the event of an incident related to a child's specific health care need, allergy or medical condition.

### **Management and Nominates Supervisor will ensure:**

- All staff read and are aware of all medical condition policies and procedures, and ensuring that they are aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the Service
- To provide approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training to staff as required under the National Regulations.
- That all educators' approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training are current, meet the requirements of the National Law and National Regulations, and are approved by ACECQA
- At least one staff member with current approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training (refer to Definitions) is on duty at all times
- The details of approved Emergency Asthma Management (EAM) training are included on the staff record
- Parents are provided with a copy of the service's Asthma Policy upon enrolment of their child
- That when medication has been administered to a child in an asthma emergency without authorisation from the parent/guardian or authorised nominee, the parent/guardian of the child and emergency services are notified as soon as is practicable

- To identify children with asthma during the enrolment process and informing staff
- To provide families with an **Asthma Action Plan** to be completed in consultation with, and signed by, a medical practitioner
- To develop a **Risk Minimisation Plan** for every child with asthma, in consultation with parents/guardians
- That all children with asthma have an **Asthma Action Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan** filed with their enrolment record
- A medication record is kept for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the Service
- Families of all children with asthma provide reliever medication and a spacer (including a child's face mask, if required) at all times their child is attending the Service
- The asthma first aid procedure is consistent with current national recommendations
- That all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- The expiry date of reliever medication is checked regularly and replaced when required, and that spacers and face masks are replaced after every use
- Communication between management, educators, staff and parents/guardians regarding the Service's Asthma Policy and strategies are reviewed and discussed regularly to ensure compliance
- All staff are able to identify and minimise asthma triggers for children attending the Service, where possible
- That children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- That children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential
- To communicate any concerns with parents/guardians regarding the management of children with asthma at the Service
- Asthma Australia's Asthma First Aid posters are displayed in key locations at the Service
- That medication is administered in accordance with the Administration of Medication Policy

#### **Educators will ensure:**

- They are aware of the service's Asthma Policy and Asthma first aid procedure (ensuring that they can identify children displaying the symptoms of an asthma attack and locate their personal medication, and Asthma Action Plans
- To maintain current approved Asthma Management qualifications
- They are able to identify and, where possible, minimising asthma triggers as outlined in the child's Asthma Action Plan
- Asthma first aid kit, children's personal asthma medication and Asthma Action Plans are taken on excursions or other offsite events
- To administer prescribed asthma medication in accordance with the child's Asthma Action Plan and the services Administration of Medication Policy.
- A **Risk Minimisation Plan** is developed for every child with asthma in consultation with parents/guardians
- To discuss with parents/guardians the requirements for completing the enrolment form and medication record for their child
- To consult with the parents/guardians of children with asthma in relation to the health and safety of their child, and the supervised management of the child's asthma
- Communicate any concerns to parents/guardians if a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities
- That children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- That children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their full potential

**Families will:**

- Read the services Asthma Management Policy
- Inform staff, either on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has asthma
- Provide a copy of their child’s Asthma Action Plan to the service and ensuring it has been prepared in consultation with, and signed by, a medical practitioner.
- Have the Asthma Action Plan reviewed and updated at least annually
- Ensure all details on their child’s enrolment form and medication record are completed prior to commencement at the service
- Work with staff to develop a Risk Minimisation Plan for their child
- Provide an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication and equipment for their child at all times
- Notify staff, in writing, of any changes to the information on the Asthma Action Plan, enrolment form or medication record
- Communicate regularly with educators/staff in relation to the ongoing health and wellbeing of their child, and the management of their child’s asthma
- Encourage their child to learn about their asthma, and to communicate with Service staff if they are unwell or experiencing asthma symptoms.

**Plan of action for a child with diagnosed asthma**

The staff, together with the parents/guardians of a child with asthma, will discuss and agree on a plan of action for the emergency management of an asthma attack based on the Asthma First Aid Plan. This plan will be included as part of, or attached to, the child’s asthma action plan and enrolment record. This plan should include action to be taken where the parents/guardians have provided asthma medication, and in situations where this medication may not be available.

**Source**

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard.
- Staying Healthy in Child Care. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition
- Asthma Australia – [www.asthmaaustralia.org.au](http://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au)

**Review**

Policy Review Date
June 2018