



Arc Guide to Administering Medication in Public Schools

Each local school board establishes policies to operate schools in their district. Policies define the direction and intent of the school board. In most districts, there is a policy related to medication administration for students' in the district. In regards to medication administration, the same policy usually covers students with and without disabilities. The Arc Greater Twin Cities recommends that parents/guardians/responsible parties review policies developed by their school district.

There is typically a school staff person who is responsible for medication administration in schools. It is important that parents/guardians/responsible parties whose child needs medication at school communicate with this person.

Below is some general information from school district policies about administering medications in schools.

1. The medication must be brought in the original container.
2. The container must document the student's name, the medical provider who prescribed it and how it should be given.
3. A new medication consent form must be signed and given at the beginning of each school year and when there are changes in giving the medication.
4. Appropriate school personnel along with parents/guardians/responsible parties and medical provider will develop a plan for emergency medicines (Epipen, Diastat, Glucagon, etc.) based on the student's needs.
5. Medication administered in school is kept in a locked area.
6. Sometimes students may be able to have and give their own medications.
7. For students with disabilities who receive special education and related services through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and students with a disability who have a Section 504 Plan, it is recommended that an Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) be developed.*

Student Self-Administration of Medications:

Students may be able to possess their medication (for example, an asthma rescue inhaler) if they have written consent from parents/guardians/responsible parties and medical providers. This form is often called "Request to Administer Medication at School". The form is completed yearly. To be able to do this, the school nurse must meet with the student. The nurse must document that student can carry their own medication.



Medication Administration and School Staff

A nurse licensed by the Board of Teaching is responsible for nursing services in the school. This includes medication administration.

The school nurse determines what other school staff, if any, can give medication. That individual is called an Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP).

A secondary student (middle school or older) may have and use nonprescription medications. This does not apply to the possession or use of any medication or product containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine.

Things to consider:

1. School staff may want to speak to medical providers about the student's medical issues. They will need a signed consent form to do so. It is recommended to have a conversation with medical providers to discuss concerns you have about medical providers talking to school staff.
2. Does a nurse need to be in the school building due to my child's needs or does a nurse need to be available to meet my child's needs? Think about the medical needs of your child.
3. Health treatments such as catheterization, tracheotomy suctioning, and gastrostomy feedings are not considered medication administration and therefore are not covered by the medication administration policy.
4. Emergency health procedures, including emergency administration of medication are not covered by the medication administration policy.

*See Arc Guide to Individualized Healthcare Plans (IHP) Link References:

- MN Statute 121A.21 School Health Services
- MN Statute 121A.22 Administration Of Drugs And Medicine
- MN Statute 144.29 Health Records; Children Of School Age
- MN Statute 148.171, Subd. 24 Unlicensed Assistive Personnel

For further information or advocacy services, contact The Arc Minnesota at 952-920-0855 or toll-free at 833.450.1494 or visit www.arcminnesota.org. (Please note: *This document is not legal advice, and should not be construed as such. Thus, no information herein should replace the sound advice of an attorney.*)

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