

## ASTHMA CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL NURSES

**NOTE: Any child who needs medications delivered at school or who self-administers medications at school must have an Oral Medication Order Form.**

### I. Planning for Care before School Begins

- School nurse is notified that student has asthma.
- School nurse sends an asthma history form home for parents to provide additional information about the student's asthma.
- School nurse calls or meets with the student and family.
- Discuss parent/student expectations of asthma care while at school.
- Discuss details of asthma management plan obtained from primary health care provider and accommodation needs at school.
- Determine equipment and supplies needs for school including a 3-day disaster supply.
- Discuss plans for communication with parent and primary health care provider.
- Discuss role of health services and personnel involved.
- Obtain Oral Medication Order form if needed for delivery of medications at school.
- Obtain parent request for care and other legal documents as needed.
- If needed, have parents sign an Exchange of Medical Information form.

### II. Assigning Level of Care

- Considering the severity of the student's asthma and the student's needs at school, determine level of nursing care needs and assign a level based on the "Staff Model for the Delivery of School Health Services." The following depicts usual nursing level assignments for students with asthma: (Appendix J)

Level B	Medically Fragile
Level C	Medically Complex
Level D	Health Concerns

#### **Level B (Medically Fragile)-Individual Health Plan/Section 504 Plan**

- With the parent, and student if appropriate, develop the Individual Health Plan/Section 504 Plan and School Asthma Emergency Plan. This planning may include others who will provide care to the student. Issues to be addressed include:
  - a. Management of routine medications
  - b. Management of an acute asthma attack
  - c. Monitoring peak flow measurements
  - d. Participation in activities (physical education, recess)
  - e. Field trips
  - f. Transportation
  - g. Obtain Oral Medication Order form
- Review school day schedule and assess level of independence.
- If needed, clarify specifics of treatment by talking with the primary health care provider.
- Notification and education of school personnel working with the student, e.g., secretary, lunchroom and playground personnel, principal, transportation, coaches.
- Training of personnel who will give medications or supervise activities.
- Providing classroom education as needed.
- Monitor staff and student needs and update as needed.
- Annual review of IHP/Section 504 plan or revise as needed.

**Level C (Medically Complex)—Planning for Care**

- Obtain the Oral Medication Order Form signed by the primary health care provider.
- Assure medications are pharmacy labeled with student's name, primary health care provider, type of medication, dose, delivery methods, and any special instructions.
- Develop a School Asthma Emergency Plan with the parent and student, if appropriate. Distribute to all school personnel who interact with the student.
- Obtain Exchange of Medical Information form if needed.
- Renew medications, order annually or as needed.

**Level D (Health Concerns)—Monitoring**

- Assure health concern of asthma is recorded in health files.
- Assess health status as needed to assure student's maximum participation in school educational and physical activities.
- As needed, review of student's asthma and possible treatment needs.

**III. Self-Administration of Oral Medications**

Asthma is a condition that requires immediate treatment when an asthma attack occurs. For this reason many school districts allow self-administration of asthma medications; however, some school districts do not allow any medications to be self-administered. District policy should be reviewed before self-administration is considered.

- Assess student's readiness for self-administration of oral medications or peak flow monitoring.
  - Student is capable of identifying individual medications.
  - Student is knowledgeable of purpose of individual medications.
  - Student is able to identify/associate specific symptom occurrence and need for medication administration.
  - Student is capable/knowledgeable of medication dosage.
  - Student is knowledgeable about method of medication administration.
  - Student is able to state side effects/adverse reactions to this medication.
  - Student is knowledgeable of how to access assistance for self if needed in an emergency.
  - Student is able to identify safety issues: no sharing of medications with others; need for safe storage of medication; consistent placement of medication.
- Obtain an Oral Medication Order form indicating permission from the primary health care provider and parent for the student to self-administer oral medications.
- Develop a plan for oral medication administration with the student, parent and other school personnel as needed.
- Develop a School Asthma Emergency Plan.

**IV. Promoting Independence in the Student's Self-Management**

As the student grows and develops, responsibility in assessing and making asthma management decisions should progress. School nurses can assist in promoting this independence within the school setting in various ways.

- **Assess and promote:**
  - Knowledge and understanding of asthma
  - Use of the metered dose inhaler
  - Recognition of asthma symptoms
  - Avoidance of asthma triggers
  - Planning for self-care
- **Assess asthma control in relation to:**
  - Absenteeism rate
  - Participation in activities, particularly physical education, recess
  - School performance

- **Assess social/emotional growth related to student's asthma and self-care:**
  - Feeling that he/she is different from other students
  - Avoids taking medications; toughs it out during an attack
  - Reluctance to go to office for medications
  - Notifying school personnel about medication need or use if self-administering
  - Safety issues, e.g., not sharing medications with other students
- **Promote self-esteem:**
  - Assist student in providing information about asthma to others
  - Positive feedback for good decisions
  - Increasing independence in plan of care