

SUPPORTING

Ontario Children and Students with Medical Conditions

PARENT/ GUARDIAN FACT SHEET

Keeping Students with Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy Safe: Information for Parents and Guardians

When it comes to supporting a child with a medical condition, cooperation and communication between a parent or guardian and the school is very important. As the parent or guardian, you are encouraged to work with the principal and your child (as appropriate) to develop a plan for your child's medical needs. We all play important roles in keeping children healthy and safe.

WHAT ARE SCHOOL BOARDS DOING TO KEEP STUDENTS WITH ANAPHYLAXIS, ASTHMA, DIABETES, AND/OR EPILEPSY SAFE?

All school boards in Ontario are now expected to develop and maintain policies to support their students who have asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and/or are at risk for anaphylaxis, as outlined in Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 161: Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy) in Schools. A key component of PPM 161 is that a Plan of Care be in place for each child at school with one or more of these four medical conditions. PPM 161 does not replace the requirements of Sabrina's Law, 2005, and Ryan's Law, 2015.

WHAT IS THE PLAN OF CARE?

The Plan of Care contains information about your child with anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and/or epilepsy. It helps to keep your child healthy and safe at school, ensures that your child feels included and respected, and enables them to participate in school to their full potential. The Plan of Care is co-developed by you, the school principal, school staff (as appropriate), and your child (as appropriate) within the first 30 school days of each school year and should be updated when there are any changes to your child's medical condition. The Plan of Care helps to inform the school of:

- your child's routine or daily management of their medical condition
- required medications and where they are kept
- potential triggers and preventative measures
- symptoms and what to do if a medical incident occurs
- how to support or accommodate your child
- instructions and notes from your child's health care professional (if applicable).

With your permission, the Plan of Care is shared with all school staff who work with your child, such as teachers, food services staff, and school administrators, so they can better support your child and can respond appropriately if there is a medical incident and/or emergency.

Note: this fact sheet uses the term "medical condition" to make the text simpler to read, but it is understood that a child can have more than one medical condition.

You as the parent or guardian, your child, the school principal and school staff all play important roles in the management of your child's medical condition while they are at school.

With your permission, your child's Plan of Care will be shared with all school staff who work with your child so they can respond more appropriately if there is a medical incident and/or emergency.

WHAT IS MY ROLE AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN?

Your role is essential. As a parent or guardian, you are an active participant in supporting the management of your child's medical condition while they are at school. It is important for you to:

- inform the school of your child's medical condition
- meet with the principal to develop the Plan of Care
- have open, ongoing communication with your child's principal
- teach your child about their medical condition and involve your child in creating and carrying out their Plan of Care, as appropriate to their age and stage of development
- provide the school with medications or other supplies needed to support your child while at school and replenish these throughout the school year as needed (including the tracking of medication expiration dates)
- reconnect with your child's principal at the beginning of each school year or when there are changes to your child's medical condition or the management of the condition (e.g., dosage, medication type).

WHAT IS MY CHILD'S ROLE?

Your child is expected to take part in developing their Plan of Care and managing their medical condition, appropriate to their stage of development and their capacity to self-manage the condition. Your child's role could include:

- carrying out daily or routine activities for managing their medical condition, such as checking blood sugar or using their inhaler
- telling teachers/others what is needed to help keep them safe, healthy, and able to fully participate in school activities
- communicating with parents/guardians and school staff when they are having difficulties at school related to their medical condition and when they need help.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MY CHILD'S SCHOOL?

The principal and school staff, which could include teachers, food services staff, school administrators, and others, are expected to:

- review the contents of the Plan of Care for any child with whom they have direct contact
- work to create an inclusive learning environment by allowing and supporting children with prevalent medical conditions to perform daily or routine activities to manage their conditions
- help to reduce the risk of a medical incident or emergency
- support children with prevalent medical conditions to participate in school programs/activities to their full potential, as outlined in their Plan of Care.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Find more information about supporting students with anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and/or epilepsy at:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/medicalconditions.html

Tell the school about your child's medical condition.

Work with the principal and your child (as appropriate) to develop the Plan of Care.

Let the principal know if there are any changes to your child's medical condition or health needs.
