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PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS USING MEDICATION

PURPOSE

Medication therapy may be crucial in allowing students to function and learn to their full potential in the schools setting.

DEFINITION OF MEDICATIONS

Medication is defined as any oral, topical, inhaled or injected medication (whether prescribed or over-the-counter) that may be administered in compliance with the medication policy and procedures. Over-the-counter medication includes: aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, herbs, vitamins, minerals, sprays, creams and ointments. In the Orange County Schools, over-the-counter medications can only be administered through a doctor's order.

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OF MEDICATION USAGE AT SCHOOL

- Required to maintain and support the child's continued presence in school;
- Required to maximize the child's classroom performance;
- Required in the event of an acute systemic allergic reaction or poisoning;
- Required in the event of a life-threatening emergency;
- Approved by the medical director;
- FDA approved for use in the school setting: Note: research medications generally are not FDA approved for school settings;
- Deemed safe for use in the school setting;
- Avoid administering medications or drugs that can normally be given outside school hours, such as antibiotics or allergy shots; and
- The nurse may use his/her judgment in accepting medically necessary medication normally given outside normal school hours

COMPONENTS REQUIRED ON MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENTATION

The Orange County Schools Board of Education recommends the use of its "Medication Authorization" form by medical providers in the community since it has been developed to cover components required for the medication administration documentation. See the section at the end of these procedures for the board approved form (Form A-2). Other forms may be used if all the required components are present. Medication authorization forms must be completed for each medication on an annual basis*. When dosage or medication changes are prescribed, the parent/guardian must provide the school with a new authorization form. Required components include:

- Name of student
- Name of medication
- Date it was prescribed
- Dosage
- Route medication is to be given
- Time(s) the medication is to be given
- Special instructions about the student receiving the medication or about the medication itself (i.e., storage info.)
- Date of completion for medication at school
- Possible side effects of the medication
- Possible adverse reactions to the medication
- Name and telephone number of health care provider

*Medication authorization documents ideally shall be obtained/renewed at the start of each school year. Occasionally a hardship results when medications are started at school later in the year. If the parent/guardian or physician is unable to renew the authorization at the beginning of the new school year, the former authorization form may be kept and

considered valid for one full calendar year. All authorizations must be valid through the summer until the beginning of the next school year since some students attend summer school.

1. Medication Storage

A. Proper containers

Each medication must be provided to the school system by the parent/guardian in a pharmacy-labeled container that includes:

- Child's name
- Name of medication
- Exact dose to be given
- Time the medication is to be given
- How the medication is to be administered (the route)

Over-the-counter medication must be provided in its original container by the parent/guardian.

When dosage or medication changes are prescribed, the parent/guardian must provide the school with new, labeled containers.

B. School-site storage

Medications shall be stored in a safe manner. The following guidelines must be followed:

- Storage units must be locked when not in use
- Students must not have access to medications without supervision
- Storage units must be located in an area accessible to all staff administering medication. If such an area does not exist, the storage unit must be mobile. Emergency medication storage must be secure and yet readily accessible to staff and students involved.
- Medication refrigerators must be available at each school and located in a central area accessible to all staff administering medication. These medication refrigerators must be kept separate from food items. A lock must be available and in use either on the refrigerator or on a container storing the medication inside the unit. Temperatures need to be between 36 and 46 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent them from freezing or spoiling.

C. Discarding medications

All unused medications shall be discarded when medications are discontinued or at the end of the school year. Unused medication will be returned to the parent/guardian or authorized adult designee within 2 weeks of discontinuation or by the last teacher workday of the school year. Exception: medications and accompanying documentation will be kept and transferred to the appropriate school site for students attending summer school in the Orange County School system.

Students who self-administer but keep their medications in the nurse's office may remove their own medications from the school site. Medications not picked up by the parent/guardian will be removed from the medication storage unit by the school nurse prior to the start of the new school year. These medications are discarded in an appropriate manner.

2. Handling of medications

All medications shall be handled in a safe and prudent manner. This includes:

- taking infection control precautions, including using aseptic technique when indicated
- using appropriate equipment and supplies for counting, dispensing, and administering medications
- withdrawing only the dosage necessary
- administering medication in a manner that protects student's confidentiality
- parents/guardians must maintain communication with the school staff regarding any changes in the student's condition, medication and other health needs at school
- staff should contact the parent/guardian when medication is pending expiration or prior to the "last one" being administered. Form D (Notification of Need for Medication) may be used.

3. Transportation and “check-in” of medications

If the parent/guardian does not wish to come to school and administer medication to their child as prescribed, they may provide a written authorization for school personnel to administer the doctor-prescribed medication.

All medications must be brought to the school office by the parent/guardian and signed in. During the “check-in” procedures, the school nurse or designee must:

- Ensure that a current medication authorization form is fully completed and on file
- Ensure that the medication is stored in an approved container
- Count and document the amount of medication brought to the office
- Obtain the signature of the adult providing the medication

See the “School Trip” section and “Care of Students and Staff in Unanticipated Disasters or Hardship Events” section for proper handling of medications while outside the school building.

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR NON-LICENSED PERSONNEL

All non-licensed school personnel administering medications to students at a school site will receive training initially and then every 3 years or whenever there is a policy/procedure change or other significant indicator. Non-licensed personnel, in regards to medication administration, are defined as any individual that does not hold a current NC nursing license. School staff willing to administer medications must demonstrate an ability to use sound judgment and precise methods to ensure student safety. The training program must be designed to measure the staff member’s knowledge and skill in the area of safe medication administration. All training programs must contain the following minimum components:

1. Scope of duties – licensed vs. unlicensed personnel
2. Legal and ethical responsibilities, including:
 - maintaining confidentiality
 - Reporting medication errors
 - student rights
 - responsibilities while administering medications, including knowing their limitations and when to contact a licensed nurse
3. Medication administration, including:
 - Medication preparation
 - Medication orders
 - Medication labels
 - Abbreviations
 - Measurement systems
 - Six rights of medication administration (right child, right medication, right dosage, right time, right route, write)
4. Special circumstances in medication administration, such as allergies or special student needs when administering medications
5. Medication routes – how to administer the medication
6. Infection control
7. Storage, handling and transporting meds, including medication administration supplies

All non-licensed staff assigned to medication administration must demonstrate competency in the above areas. Therefore, the basic training program will take a minimum of 2 hours to complete. Additional time may be necessary for reinforcement and observation of competency. Non-licensed staff attending the training will be given time away from their regular duties with coverage as indicated. The school nurse, in collaboration with the principal, shall designate primary and back-up personnel in each school with responsibility for the security and administration of the medication. Documentation will be kept on training sessions, attendees, and whether attendee passed or failed the course.

SUPERVISION OF NON-LICENSED PERSONNEL

All non-licensed school personnel administering medications to students at a school site must be willing to (1) operate independently; (2) know his/her own limitations and ask for assistance from a school nurse when questions arise or assistance is indicated; and (3) allow the school nurse to supervise his/her activity and provide constructive feedback. The school nurse, or another school nurse designee, must be available to provide on-going technical assistance and oversight. The nurse does not have to be physically “on-site” at the school at all times, but non-licensed staff must be able to contact a nurse and obtain support when needs arise. The school nurse is responsible for the management of the school health program in his/her assigned school. The oversight role of the school nurse in medication administration includes:

- Coordinating and monitoring the administration of medication in each school
- Periodically observing non-licensed personnel administering different types of medications to evaluate performance. At minimum, non-licensed staff will be observed 2 times during the school year.
- Periodically auditing medication records to (1) evaluate compliance with legal requirements for proper documentation; and (2) to ensure the student is receiving appropriate medication as authorized. Medication audits should be performed monthly at minimum.
- Reviewing medication errors and initiating steps to take to prevent future errors, including providing additional training as indicated.
- Consulting with school administrators, staff, parents and students regarding medication safety and concerns at school.
- Serving as liaison with parents, physicians and the appropriate individuals regarding status and effectiveness of student’s medication treatment plan.
- Ensuring proper storage, handling and transportation of medications.
- Assisting nursing supervisor in the development and annual evaluation of written school policy and procedures for medication administration.

MEDICATION RECORDS & REPORTS

Medication records/logs must contain the following information:

1. Name of student
2. Student’s date of birth
3. School and school year
4. Teacher or grade
5. Physician and contact information
6. Name of medication
7. Start and end dates for the treatment regimen
8. Dose, route, and time when the medication is scheduled to be given
9. Any special comments/instructions
10. Legal signature (first initial, last name and title) of the person administering medications as well as their initials
11. Documentation of the actual administration of the medication. The time the medication was given and the person’s initials who administered the medication must be recorded in the corresponding month/day box.

Medication authorization forms and records/logs are kept on every child and every medication administered in the school district. These forms are kept in a designed site at each school and must be secured in a manner that ensures confidentiality. At the end of the school year, the forms shall be placed in the student’s individual medication record. All written parent and doctor authorizations and medication logs and records should be retained on file at school for as long as the child is enrolled in the school system and until the student reaches age 29.

Various reports are compiled using non-identifying information from medication records. The purpose of the reports is to: (1) evaluate the quality, accuracy, safety and compliance with written guidelines; (2) make recommendations for improvements/changes to principals and school staff as indicated; and (3) identify how medication administration is utilized to enhance student performance and school attendance. These reports include:

- Audit report summaries submitted to the OCS Nursing Supervisor
- End-of-year reports submitted to the NC Department of Health
- Incident report summaries submitted to the OCS Nursing Supervisor
- Information reports to school staff on the impact of treatment on student success

MEDICATION ERRORS

Every effort should be made to avoid medication errors. Examples of errors include, but are not limited to:

- Forgetting to give a dose
- Giving the medication to the wrong child
- Giving the wrong medication or the wrong dose
- Giving the medication at the wrong time
- Giving the medicine by the wrong route
- Giving the medication without a written order from the physician

In the event that an error occurs, the individual making the error must report it to the school nurse and their administrator (principal or Director of Student Services) using the approved "Medication Administration Incident Report" form (Form C). The purpose of the incident report form is for internal review by appropriate personnel to ensure proper steps are/were taken to:

- Minimize the medical consequences of the error
- Notify the parent/guardian and medical provider if indicated
- Provide appropriate follow-up on the student
- Avoid future errors. This may include further training or disciplinary action.

A copy of the form will be kept in the school nurse's office in a separate file. (Do not place in the student's individual medical record or cumulative folder.) The original forms will be submitted to the Director of Student Services for review and appropriate follow-up.

At the time of the incident, the parents/guardians will be notified of the error and the steps taken to minimize any consequences. The parent/guardian will also receive information of any necessary steps to take for follow-up of the incident. Steps will be taken so that future errors do not occur. As with any medication administration, proper documentation will be made on the medication log or in the student's individual medical record.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students enrolled in the Orange County Schools will receive the following information and then be held responsible for:

- Knowing and following the regulations of the medication policy, including not bringing unauthorized medication to school
- Avoiding sharing their medication with other student and accepting disciplinary action if this offense occurs

STUDENT SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

Students with on-going health conditions whose parent/guardians, physicians, and school nurse assess that he/she has sufficient maturity and knowledge to use a medication in a safe and appropriate manner will be allowed to retain the medication in his/her possession. In turn, this student will be able to administer their own medication. The school nurse, in consultation with the principal, is the final judge of the student's compliance with these guidelines in the school.

To allow students to carry and use their own medication, the following must occur:

1. A student who parents and physician assess, in collaboration with the school nurse, that he/she has sufficient maturity and knowledge to use a medication in a safe and appropriate manner will be allowed to retain it in his/her possession.

Note: Students must consistently demonstrate safe and prudent handling of this responsibility to maintain the privilege of retaining medication in their possession. This includes demonstrating the correct use of the medication to the school nurse and compliance with the following:

- recognizing the need for and adhering to proper timing for the medication as prescribed by physician
- keeping the medication in his/her possession at all times and not leaving it in a place accessible to other students

- not offering, nor allowing, any use or possession of his/her medication by another student
 - acting in a responsible and discreet manner concerning his/her medication
 - notifying the school office, school nurse or teacher if he/she is having more difficulty than usual with his/her health condition. If the student is having more difficulty than usual with his/her chronic health condition, he/she will not continue to use the medication in the place of getting medical care.
 - consulting with the school nurse on a regular basis
2. The physician, parent and student must complete and sign the “MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FOR SELF-ADMINISTRATION” form (Procedure 6125-P, Form B) on an annual basis as with all other medication authorization forms. This form will cover the assessment and written consent necessary for self-administration.
 3. The “Medication Authorization for Self-Administration” form must be on file with all the other medication authorization forms.
 4. Prescribed medication must be readily accessible to students with chronic health conditions to avoid exacerbation of symptoms.

FIELD TRIPS

When a medication authorization is in place, the plan must be followed on any off-campus school activity including a school field trip.

Prior to the School Field Trip

1. One adult (plus one or two back-ups if needed) will assume the duty as the “medication and first aid provider” for the school trip.
2. The “medication/first aid provider” for the school trip will cross check the student school trip roster with the school’s routine daily medication staff member.
3. Identify any students who may need routine daily medication during the school trip as well as any student needing ready access to emergency medications.
4. If a student needs medication not routinely given at school, a medication authorization form must be completed by the physician and parent/guardian prior to the school trip. The appropriately labeled medication and form must be received by the school nurse or medication designee.
5. As students are identified, the school nurse or school’s medication designee will prepare the student’s dose(s) for the school trip. Preparation of medication for school field trip for each individual student:
 - Remove the number of doses needed for the school trip from the original pharmacy-labeled bottle and place in an individual dose packet. Label each dose packet with the student’s name, name of medication, time to receive the medication, and any instructions (such as “take with plenty of water”). Steps must be taken to keep medications at the appropriate temperature level prior to administration.
 - Create a list of students who will be on the school trip.
 - Provide these medication doses, any emergency medications, and any special directions for the school trip.
 - Make copies of each student’s medication authorization form for the field trip.Give the materials prepared to the “medication/first aid provider”.
6. Consult with the school nurse for assistance if specific skills or training are needed by the field trip staff prior to the day of the field trip. This is to assure that the staff is prepared for students who may need any emergency medication or who are at known risk for certain health emergencies. Also, consult parents, when needed, to assure that all school trip staff members are adequately prepared to care for any student with special needs on the school trip.
7. Identify who to call and how to reach them (such as the school nurse) if telephone consultation may be needed while on the school trip.

On the Day(s) of the School Field Trip

1. The school trip “medication/first aid provider” will pick up all student medications, any emergency medications, copies of medication authorization plans and emergency action plans and the first aid supply box at school from the school nurse or school’s medication designee.

2. All medications and forms will be kept secure from possible theft or loss. Medications may be kept by the “medication/first aid provider” in a locked box, or by wearing a back pack or fanny pack to ensure that medications and information sheets are never left unattended or out of sight at any time. Medications must be
3. kept at the appropriate temperature level prior to administration.
4. The school trip “medication/first aid provider” will assure that each student receives his/her doses at the correct time and by the correct route according to the school medication authorization plan. (Check this form prior to giving any dose to prevent risk of error.)
5. The school trip “medication/first aid provider” will note any errors or incidences about the medications if not given or if given incorrectly for any reason.
6. The school trip “medication/first aid provider” will keep all student-labeled empty packets, all unused emergency medications, and all student information sheets to return to school after the field trip is over.

Upon Returning to School After the School Trip

1. The school trip “medication/first aid provider” will return all student-labeled empty packets, any medications not taken, all emergency medications, and all student information forms, and all unused first aid supplies to the school nurse or school’s medication designee.
2. The school trip “medication/first aid provider” will record all doses given on each student’s medication log sheet witnessed by the school nurse or school’s medication designee.
3. The school trip “medication/first aid provider” will give written error or incident reports that may have occurred on the school trip to the school nurse or school’s medication designee.
Note: all medication errors or incidences will be reported to the school nurse or school administrator for follow-up. Prompt parent notification will occur as indicated.
4. The school nurse or medication designee will check the school trip list to assure that:
 - all student medication records/logs are documented for the school trip day
 - all emergency medications and single doses are accounted for
5. If the school nurse is not immediately available, the medication designee will consult with the nurse as soon as possible to discuss events or questions about any school trip incidents as needed.

LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS

The Memorandum of Agreement between the Orange County Schools and Orange County Health Department outlines exceptions to the medication policy approved by the medical director in the event of an emergency situation. The Orange County Health Department will provide medical consultation. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, (1) the student’s parents/guardians and physician must be notified immediately; and (2) the school will activate the EMS service. Exemptions allowed in life-threatening emergencies are as follows:

1. Administration of activated charcoal for ingestion of certain kinds of poisons.
 - The school nurse and non-licensed personnel trained in medication administration are authorized to administer activated charcoal for the emergency treatment of certain kinds of poisoning after directed to do so by the poison control center. This is given to help prevent the poison from being absorbed from the stomach into the body.
 - The student’s parents, the physician, and the National Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) should be called. Poison Control will then instruct on avenues of care and give administration instructions.
 - Any child who is given a dose of activated charcoal should be seen by a physician and/or transported by EMS as instructed by emergency personnel.
 - The only liability or responsibility assumed by the school system or its personnel in the administration of activated charcoal is to administer in accordance with poisoning emergency treatment recommendations from the Orange County Health Department protocol per Memo of Agreement between Orange County Schools and Orange County Health Department.
2. Emergency administration of Epinephrine/Diphenhydramine by school nurses
The school nurse is authorized to administer oral diphenhydramine and/or subcutaneous epinephrine to any student or staff member who exhibits symptoms of anaphylactic shock according to the Anaphylaxis Emergency Protocol of the Orange County Health Department as per our Memo of Agreement. This agreement is for medication deemed crucial in life-threatening situations not foreseen. The medical director’s authorization covers licensed nurses only.

- 3. Albuterol Inhaler Administration by school nurses
 School nurses may administer albuterol (2 puffs) to any student experiencing an asthma event who has a current medication authorization on file. This would be in situations where the inhaler is not on-site. If the asthma symptoms do not resolve after the initial treatment, EMS will be contacted. Once the inhaler is used, it must be discarded.

FIRST AID MEDICATIONS

The following over-the-counter first aid medications may be administered by nurses and non-licensed personnel as outlined below:

Caladryl lotion	Hydrocortisone cream – up to 2%
Bee sting analgesic (2% Lidocaine 50% Alcohol)	Vaseline
Ammonia Inhalants	Saline solution
Neosporin/Triple antibiotic ointment	Contact solution

Prior to administration of any over-the-counter medication:

- The student’s emergency health card will be reviewed to assess any contraindicated allergies.
- The student will be asked if they have any allergies
- The proper medication will be determined according to the criteria below:

Caladryl lotion	Ammonia inhalants
Bee sting analgesic (2% Lidocaine HCL 50% Alcohol)	Hydrocortisone cream – up to 2%
Neosporin/Triple antibiotic ointment	

Following the administration of any over-the-counter first aid medication, proper documentation in the child’s individual medical record will occur.

UNANTICIPATED DISASTERS OR HARDSHIP EVENTS

In the event that the school day is interrupted or extended due to unanticipated disasters or hardship events, every effort will be made to work with community partners to ensure students and staff receives medically necessary medications.

Examples of unanticipated disasters or hardship events may include, but not be limited to:

- Bomb threats or other events where students remain outside of the school building for an extended period of time
- Students remaining at school due to bad weather and unsafe roads which hinder them from reaching home
- Students relocated to another school site due to lock-down, etc.

Community partners may include, but not limited to:

Parents	Law enforcement workers
Pharmacists	EMS workers

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

On an annual basis, students, parents and guardians will receive the following information:

- Students will be informed that sharing their medication with other students is prohibited and considered a very serious offense. If the student is discovered doing this, there are consequences as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct (Policy #4300). Students will be given this information through the review of the Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary measures for violating the regulation are determined by the principal.
- Students, parents/guardians will receive information and instruction regarding school policy on medication administration, including the fact that unauthorized medication cannot be brought on school grounds. The Orange County School’s Medication Policy will be made available through parent handbooks, newsletters, handouts, school offices and on the Orange County Schools’ website.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

To ensure safe and prudent measures are taken during medication administration, the following current resources shall be made available to the school nurse:

- Physician’s Desk Reference (PDR) or Drug Facts and Comparison
- Nursing Drug Handbook
- On-line medical resources (official sites)
- National Guidelines for Medication Administration at School (National Association of School Nurses)
- Videotape/DBD training program: “Assisting Children with Medications at School – A Guide for School Personnel” or other more recent publication