

What is medication?

For the Department for Education the term 'medication' includes all prescribed, non-prescribed, over the counter and alternative therapies (vitamins, minerals and supplements) that are required to be administered in education and care services.

'Medication' in education and care does not include sunscreen, nappy rash cream, moisturising lip balm, lubricating eye drops or moisturiser (emollient) where they are un-medicated.

Administration routes

Education and care services can only administer medication aurally (ear drops), orally (via the mouth), inhaled (through the mouth or nose) or topically (on the skin).

Education and care staff cannot administer any medication that is injected or administered rectally.

Where your child has alternative or complex medication requirements they may be eligible to be supported by the Access Assistant Program or the RN Delegation of Care Program.

More information on the AAP or RNDCP can be found on the Department for Education website www.education.sa.gov.au

3x per day administration

Generally, medication that requires administration three times per day can be administered from home outside of school hours (in the morning, after school and in the evening) and does not require administration in an education service.

First dose of a new medication

Your child cannot be administered a first dose of a new medication at an education or care service. Due to the dangers of an adverse reaction the first dose should be supervised by you or health professional.

An exception to this is where emergency medications are prescribed (ie midazolam or adrenaline).

Authority to administer

Medication cannot be administered in an education or care service without written advice on a Medication Agreement.

Medication agreements can be accessed on the Department for Education website www.education.sa.gov.au

Education and care staff **cannot** administer medication where

- a medication agreement is not in place,
- a medication agreement has been modified, overwritten or is illegible,
- any of the 'medication rights' are in doubt
- medications are injected or administered rectally

Medication agreements can be completed by a treating health professional or pharmacist (for over the counter medicines).

Where a completed medication agreement is not available arrangements can be made for you to attend the site and administer the medication.

Your responsibilities

It is your responsibility to provide the education or care service with medication and any administration equipment.

Where possible you should provide and collect your child's medication in person. Where this is not possible safe methods of transport and transfer should be discussed and agreed with the education or care service.

All medication must be provided in an original pharmacy container and have a clear pharmacy label with:

- your child's name
- date of dispensing
- name of medication
- strength of medication
- dose (how much to give)
- when it should be given
- length of treatment or end date (where appropriate)
- any other administration instructions (ie to be taken with food)
- expiry date (where there is no expiry date the medication must have been dispensed within the last 6 months)

Medication that is labelled *PRN, to be taken as directed* or similar does not provide sufficient information and will not be administered in the education or care service.

An exception to this is where your child has been approved to administer their own medication. A Carrying and/or Self-administration of Medication form can be completed.

This form can be accessed on the Department for Education website www.education.sa.gov.au

Site responsibilities

The education and care service has a duty of care to take reasonable precautions while your child is in their care.

In this instance reasonable precautions would be ensuring your child is presenting for their medication administration and that the medication is administered as directed by the health professional or pharmacist.

Site leaders must ensure staff are available and appropriately trained to administer medication to your child during attendance at the education or care service and during school related activities.

To keep your child safe two staff will be present (except for single staff services) during medication administration.

Each time medication is administered to your child in an education or care service the *Medication Rights Checklist* is followed as standard measures for safe administration practices to reduce medication errors and harm.

The *Medication Log* must be completed each time medication is administered or when medication was required but could not be administered. A copy of the *Medication Log* is forwarded to you when it is full or when the medication is no longer required.

These forms can be accessed on the Department for Education website www.education.sa.gov.au

Medication advice form

A *Medication Advice Form* will be completed and forwarded to you when

- medication has not been administered; this may include when your child has refused to take the medication, or when any of the medication rights are in doubt
- a medication incident has occurred; including a medication error or near miss
- post administration observations are required to be documented and communicated to you or a health professional

In all of these instances you will be notified immediately to determine if alternative arrangements are required for the administration of medication.

Further information

All medication management information and documents, including the Department for Education medication management procedure are available on www.education.sa.gov.au (search 'medication').

Your local education or care service can support you with further information or queries, or you can contact:

Senior Policy Officer, Health Support Planning
Phone 8226 1769
Email education.specialeducation@sa.gov.au

Medication

in education and care services



Information for
families