

Guidelines for Developing a Policy on the Administration of Medication

The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, Regulation 10 requires that a registered provider shall ensure that a preschool service has written policies available in the service as set out in schedule 5. These policies include a policy on the administration of medication.

Introduction:

Please note that these are guidelines only and are not an exhaustive list of all matters to be considered.

Some children may require medication while attending a pre-school service, especially as young children can acquire childhood illnesses, infections and other conditions that require the administration of medication.

A medication is a substance or combination of substances used to treat or prevent disease. Medications include: prescribed medications; over-the-counter medications; alternative therapies; vitamins and mineral supplements.

Medication administration is an important responsibility within the pre-school service. Having a clear, written policy and procedure on the Administration of Medication is a requirement under Regulation 10 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. A Medications policy will assist staff and parents and help reduce potential adverse outcomes for children receiving medication while attending a pre-school service.

The following information may assist you when drafting a policy/protocol/procedure for your service on the administration of medication

Points to consider:

Competence

- Are you and/or your staff competent to administer the medication, or are additional technical
- skills, training, information or instruction required? If so, an appropriate professional must provide this instruction (i.e. pharmacist, nurse, doctor).
- Who is responsible for administering medication?
- Are staff aware of the contra indications relating to the medication being administered?
- Have staff read and understood the leaflet with the medication?

- Are you and/or your staff aware of how the medication reacts with food, fluids or other medications? e.g. some medications cannot be given with milk, or when taking another medication. Is a second person available and responsible for checking the administration of medication?
- Is there a system in place to ensure the right: child; medication; dose; time and route?
- Are you and/or your staff aware of any potential adverse reactions to the medication, and of how to deal with them?

Records

- Is a copy of the administration of medication policy available for parents?
- Are you and/or your staff familiar with the medical history of each child, including allergies and any adverse reactions to medication?
- Has a medication consent form been completed by the parent/guardian? (See sample medication consent form [attached](#)) (Regulation 16(1) (j))
- Do you maintain a signed record of medicines administered, which includes details of the date, time, route and dose of the medication, and whether the medicine is prescribed or non-prescribed?
- Do you maintain a record of the outcome of the administration of the medication? e.g. was there a reduction in temperature after administration of anti-febrile agent (see explanation below); has the child developed a rash following administration of medication?
- Where medication is administered, are safeguards in place to ensure that sufficient time has elapsed between doses (e.g. if first dose has been administered at home)?
- Where a child is on a number of medications have you considered how you are going to record this information?
- Have you read the leaflet accompanying each medicine?
- Has the child received the medication for at least 24 hours prior to it being given in the service?

Anti-Febrile Medication

Anti-febrile medication is medication used to reduce a raised body temperature. The most common anti-febrile medications used are: Paracetamol (Paralink, Calpol) and Ibuprofen (Nurofen). Anti-febrile medication is important treatment for high temperatures to prevent febrile convulsions however, it should not be used unless indicated for high temperature or pain as overdose can cause significant medical problems.

- Which anti-febrile medications are administered by you and/or your staff, and for what reasons?
- Are parents/guardians notified by telephone prior to the administration of an unprescribed anti-febrile medication?
- Is there a system in place to identify children who require frequent or repeated anti-febrile medications? A child in this category may require to be seen by their doctor.

Storage of Medication

Are medicines:

- Stored out of reach of the children?
- Only accessible by particular named members of staff?
- Stored in the original containers?
- Stored safely according to the manufacturer's instructions?
- Within the expiry date?
- Medicines including non-prescribed medications shall be labelled with the name of the child that the medication is intended for

Management of Medication

- Is the correct equipment available and used for the administration of medication? e.g. measuring device (spoon.cap, other) provided by manufacturer.
- What do you do in the event of a medication error, e.g. medication given to wrong child; wrong route; wrong dosage; wrong time; omitted to be given as scheduled.
- How often is each child's medication plan/medication consent form reviewed? e.g. when a new medication is required for a child already on medication.
- Are the poisons information line number, GP, Pharmacist, Nurse and other emergency numbers readily available if required in an emergency?
- Are you and your staff aware that any questions or queries you may have about the medications that you have been asked to administer in your service can be discussed with your local pharmacist? Are the contact numbers of Pharmacist, GP, Nurse readily available?
- Have you considered how the service is going to manage the application of sunscreen to children?
- Has the service a policy on the application of sunscreen?
- Is the time and frequency of application of sunscreen documented?
- Is parental consent obtained for the application of sunscreen **not** supplied by parents? (Sunscreen supplied by parents implies consent).