

## ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICATIONS

Code **JLCD-R** Issued **10/06**

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The needs of children who require medication during school hours to maintain and support their presence in school will be met in a safe and prudent manner. Students who need to take medication at school during the school day, en route to and from school on a district vehicle or at a school-sponsored activity before, during or after school may: (1) self monitor and self administer their own medication, in accordance with their IHP; or (2) have the medication administered by a registered nurse (RN) or a licensed practical nurse (LPN). In the event that an RN or LPN is not available, an unlicensed school employee, such as a health room aide or assistant, trained by an RN may assist students with their medications, as set forth below.

### **Individual Healthcare Plans (IHP)**

The district will provide certain students having special healthcare needs an individual healthcare plan (IHP).

Students with special healthcare needs include the following

- Students with chronic health conditions requiring treatments, procedures and/or monitoring that must be performed by school personnel and that are as follows.
  - are complicated and/or lengthy
  - require several contacts with the nurse or health assistant during the day
  - are needed to prevent death or disability on an emergent basis
  - are needed for students who have medically fragile health conditions
- Students who have been granted permission to self-medicate and/or self-monitor in accordance with the district's IHP policy are also considered to have special healthcare needs.

The plan of care will provide for meeting a student's needs for health monitoring and care during the school day or at school-sponsored functions.

The district will send a notice pursuant to state law to parents/legal guardians at the beginning of each school year of available services and rights pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the IDEA and medical homebound regulations.

The parent/legal guardian and the student, if appropriate, will sign a release authorizing the school to share the student's individual healthcare plan with school staff who have a legitimate need to know the information in the IHP.

The student's IHP will contain components provided by state department of education guidelines and will be developed with input from and approval of the following individuals.

- student's healthcare practitioner who prescribed the medication
- parent/legal guardian
- student, if appropriate
- school nurse or other designated school staff member

If a student requires an accommodation plan according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to address medical/healthcare issues, the process must also meet the requirements for state-required individual healthcare plans.

## **PAGE 2 - JLCD-R - ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICATIONS**

### **Student self-monitoring and self-administration of medication through an individual healthcare plan**

By way of an eligible student's IHP, the district authorizes the student to self-monitor and self-administer medication as prescribed by a student's healthcare provider unless there is sufficient evidence that unsupervised self-monitoring or self-medication would seriously jeopardize the safety of the student or others.

- A monitoring device is an implement prescribed by a healthcare provider for monitoring a chronic health condition.
- Medication must be prescribed by a healthcare provider and contained in the original packaging with the appropriate pharmacy label or in a secure package containing a note from the prescribing physician or pharmacist that appropriately identifies the medicine. All medication authorized to be carried by the student must be maintained in a container appropriately labeled, pursuant to state law and district policy and procedures, by the pharmacist who filled the prescription.

The district will grant permission to self-monitor and self-administer medication under the following conditions.

- Permission will be granted on a year-by-year basis provided requirements herein are met.
- Permission is effective only for the school year in which it is granted and will be reviewed each school year to establish whether the student continues to meet the requirements according to state law and district procedures and policies and will be renewed if the requirements herein are met.
- The district suggests that individuals who contribute to the IHP's development consider the following in determining whether unsupervised monitoring or administering of medication would seriously jeopardize the safety of the student or others.
  - recommendations of the student's healthcare practitioner
  - student's maturity level
  - student's competency
  - the school environment
  - the type of medication or equipment involved, e.g., risk of addiction/overdose/abuse particularly in the case of controlled substances, effects of medication if taken by others, disposal procedures for biohazardous waste
  - the outcome for the student if not allowed to self-monitor or self-administer medication
  - other factors on an individual basis

The district may revoke a student's permission to self-monitor or self-administer medication pursuant to the IHP if the student endangers himself/herself or others through misuse of the monitoring device or medication. The district's code of student conduct and disciplinary procedures may be applied in cases where students misuse or distribute medication or monitoring devices.

Students may be authorized to self-monitor and self-administer medication as prescribed by the student's healthcare practitioner if the eligible student's parent/legal guardian provides the school with the following: a) written authorization from the parent/legal guardian for the student to self-monitor or self-administer medication; and, b) a written statement from the student's healthcare

## **PAGE 3 - JLCD-R - ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICATIONS**

practitioner who prescribed the medication verifying that the student has a medical condition and has been instructed and demonstrated competency in self-monitoring or self-administration of medications or both.

Required authorizations from the student's parent/legal guardian and healthcare practitioner must be kept on file in the office of the school administrator or school nurse.

A student who meets requirements in state law and district policy and procedures will be authorized to possess on his/her person and administer medication while in the classroom or in any area of the school or school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity, in transit to and from school or school-sponsored activities or during before-school or after-school activities on school-operated property.

Before the district institutes an IHP, the district will require the parent/legal guardian to sign a statement acknowledging that the district, its employees and agents, pursuant to state statute, are not liable for an injury arising from the student's self-administering medications and self-monitoring or use of self-monitoring devices and that the parent/legal guardian will indemnify and hold harmless the district and its employees and agents against any claims arising out of the self-monitoring or self-administration of medication by the student.

### **Administering medication to students by an RN or LPN**

A student may have medication administered by an RN or LPN in accordance with this policy and administrative rule. In the event that an RN or LPN is not available, an unlicensed school employee, such as a health room aide or assistant trained by an RN, may assist the student with taking his/her medication in compliance with this policy and administrative rule.

Prior to administering any medication, which includes prescription, non-prescription, herbal and homeopathic medications, all of the following conditions must be met.

- A dated request signed by the parent/legal guardian and giving permission for the medication to be administered must be on file. Such requests must be updated annually or as required by the length of the prescription. Requests must include the following information.
  - child's full name, date of birth and Social Security number
  - physician's name and telephone number
  - name of medication
  - time(s) to be administered
  - dosage
  - purpose of medication
  - possible side effects
  - termination date for administering medication
- A current signed physician's statement will be required for all prescription, herbal and homeopathic medications.
- The required parent/legal guardian permission form must include authorization for the RN or LPN to administer any medications and for an unlicensed school employee trained by the RN to assist the student with his/her medication in the absence of the RN or LPN.
- The RN or LPN responsible for the school must review and approve each request before medication may be administered.
- All medication must be properly labeled and in its original container and brought to the nurse's office immediately upon the student's arrival at school unless the student keeps the medication in his/her

## **PAGE 4 - JLCD-R - ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICATIONS**

possession pursuant to an IHP, as set forth above. Any medication found in a student's possession during the school day (other than a student who has permission to possess the medication pursuant to an IHP) will be confiscated by school personnel and the school principal will take necessary action in accordance with board policy.

- Prescription, herbal and homeopathic medication may only be taken according to the instructions signed by the physician and parent/legal guardian. Over-the-counter medications may only be taken in accordance with the instructions on the container.
- The parent/legal guardian of the student must assume responsibility for informing the RN or the LPN of any change in the student's health or change in medication.

Additional guidelines for administering medications include the following.

- Neither the district nor its personnel will be held liable in the event of adverse reactions when the medication has been given in the prescribed manner.
- The parent/legal guardian will reclaim any unused medications within 10 days of the termination of treatment or within two days of the last day of school. The school will destroy any unused medications after this time.
- The district retains the discretion to reject requests for administration of medicine.
- The RN or LPN will be responsible for the safekeeping of the medication to be administered. Medication will be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer which is accessible only by the RN, LPN or unlicensed school employee trained by the RN. Each school will maintain a current list of those persons authorized to administer or assist students with medications.
- A log prepared by the RN or LPN will be maintained at each school noting all medications with which students received assistance from authorized school employees. The log must include the date, time medication taken, dosage taken, name of medication administered and signature of person administering or assisting the student with the medication.
- The RN or LPN will communicate with parents/legal guardians and/or physicians about any problems with administering medications to students at school.
- Controlled substances as defined by Sections 44-53-190, -210, -230, -250 and -270 of the South Carolina Code of Laws should be counted upon receipt and monthly thereafter to assure doses have been administered according to the prescription on the school days attended. Discrepancies in the number of units of medication should be documented to the student's medication record and reported to the school nurse and school principal, who should investigate and take appropriate corrective action. Local law enforcement authorities and the DHEC Bureau of Drug Control should be notified if drug diversion is suspected.

### **Emergency medication (life threatening situations only)**

Medication will be routinely administered to students by the RN or LPN; however, in the event of an emergency, an unlicensed school employee trained by the RN may administer medication to students who have a history of serious allergic reaction or a health condition which may require specific medication(s) for certain life threatening circumstances and who have written authorization and individually prescribed medication.

# **PAGE 5 - JLCD-R - ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICATIONS**

## **Field studies - overnight field studies**

Parents/Legal guardians of students who will require special medical attention must notify the principal prior to a scheduled field study trip. The principal will consult with the RN to determine how to accommodate the needs of the student on the trip. Guidelines for the administration of medications on field study trips will be the same as specified in this administrative rule unless administered by the parent/legal guardian. Mini first aid kits will be provided by the RN or LPN for such trips, as appropriate.

Unlicensed school employees designated and trained by the RN may assist students with their medications when the RN or LPN is unavailable, provided they are trained as set forth below.

- The RN assigned to a school or the RN supervising the clinical practice of the LPN assigned to the school in collaboration with the LPN may select, train, determine the competency of and evaluate unlicensed school employees for assisting students with medications in situations where the RN or LPN on staff at the school is absent or not available. The training guidelines are set forth in a separate document. The RN must provide the initial training and competency determination of unlicensed school personnel. The RN may delegate training updates that do not include procedural changes and periodic re-evaluation of an unlicensed school employee's competency to an LPN if the RN has determined and documented that the LPN is competent to perform the tasks. The RN will develop a checklist for the LPN to use during training updates and the re-evaluation process. Training updates that include procedural changes will be treated as an initial training and therefore, must be first provided by the RN.
- Following training by the RN assigned to the school or the RN supervising the clinical practice of the LPN assigned to the school, unlicensed school employees trained by an RN may assist students with regularly scheduled medications during school, en route to and from school on district vehicles or at school-sponsored functions before, during or after school, if the RN or LPN is not available. A licensed healthcare prescriber or an RN must be available via a telecommunication device to answer questions that the unlicensed school employee trained by an RN may have when assisting students with medications in the absence of the RN or LPN.

"Assisting with medications" includes the acts of reminding a student of the time to take a medication, opening the container that is properly labeled and/or assisting the student to place the medication in the mouth or properly apply the medication. "Assisting with medications" does not include injectable medications or insulin in any form, instillation of medications into the eye or ear or insertion of rectal or vaginal medications. Because of risks for anaphylaxis and/or other serious reactions, an unlicensed school employee trained by an RN must not assist students with the initial dose of a routinely scheduled medication.

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