

Background summary

The Department of Education is currently seeking external stakeholder feedback on the draft *Administration of medication in schools* procedure and its associated documents.

This summary provides background about the draft procedure and associated documents, and highlights particular points for stakeholder comment.

Please return your feedback to:

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Background

The *Administration of medication in schools* procedure, the *Guidelines for the administration of medication in schools*, and its associated documents will update the [current departmental procedure](#). The review to date has accommodated legislative amendments, addressed significant matters of student safety, and responded to input from a broad stakeholder base – including schools, regions, specialist school staff and health experts (e.g. safety pharmacist).

The documents are now ready for formal external consultation.

Summary of proposed changes

The proposed procedure, guidelines and associated documents include:

- references to the *Restrictive practices* procedure
- updates to the types of medication that schools may encounter, including a new category called ‘as-needed’ medications, for example antihistamines for hay fever, Midazolam for seizures
- new advice in relation to ‘as-needed’ medications and diabetes management
- the use of new diabetes management plan templates to be completed by health practitioners
- the use of a new recording form for insulin to address specific requirements for diabetes
- references to the (yet to be released) *Administration of medication in schools* online training package (to be housed in The Learning Place)
- clarified processes for schools to support students who are self-administering medication
- new definitions (Delegate, Medication order, Over-the-counter medication, School, Secure), updated definitions (Controlled drugs, Medication authorisation, Medication error, Medications, Prescribing health practitioner, Route of administration)
- a separate and updated consent form
- updated record of administration forms
- advice regarding medicinal cannabis, chemical restraint and residential boarding facilities
- clarification on what constitutes medication authorisation

- new *Medication order* for 'as-needed' medications – a form of medical authorisation for 'as-needed' medications
- expanded information on the packaging of medication, pill-cutters and managing paperwork
- the requirement for primary school principal/delegate to risk assess and approve any student wishing to self-administer asthma medication
- the *7 RIGHTS of safe medication administration in schools* (replacing the INCLASS process)
- a new information sheet for parents/carers and prescribing health practitioners describing the requirements for Queensland state school staff to be able to administer medications to students.

Purpose

This procedure provides the process for administering medications to students when they are attending school or school-related activities, in accordance with the advice of the student's prescribing health practitioner or as an emergency first aid response.

Having clear processes and procedures in place to manage the administration of medications facilitates students' safety and meets legislative obligations.

Drivers for change

The review of this procedure was initiated as per the department's routine cycle of review. It has been informed by:

- consistent audit findings on medication administration practices in schools identifying inconsistent processes used by schools in implementing the current procedure (34% of audited schools in Jan – Oct 2020 had 'medication management' as either a High or Medium priority finding)
- the requirements of the *Restrictive practices* procedure to ensure medication is **not** being used as a form of chemical restraint to control student behaviour, by providing clear guidance about safely administering 'as-needed' medication
- advice from Organisational Safety and Wellbeing about incident reporting requirements
- advice from State Schools Registered Nurses:
 - that schools require more prescriptive advice regarding approval processes for students' self-administering their medication
 - to specify the '7 RIGHTS of safe administration of medications' in the procedure, to align with best practice used by the wider health community
 - to address technological advances made to diabetes management which now require more specific and detailed advice from health practitioners.

The proposed procedure and supporting documents reflect contemporary practice and acknowledge the benefit of schools developing a carefully considered local approach to managing medications for students in their school environment, while still meeting departmental expectations.