

Wellesley Public Schools Department of Nursing Services



Field Trip Planning for Students with Inhalers

All students have the right to participate in all school activities. No student can be denied participation in a field trip because of the need for a medication or treatment. If a field trip is planned, sufficient notice should be given to the school nurse so that plans can be put in place in order to keep every student safe and healthy while away from school. These plans may include a nurse accompanying students on the field trip, a parent being present to support their child or the self-administration of medication by the student after meeting specific guidelines.

Asthma medications should be administered to students during school sponsored trips/activities when necessary or when ordered. The administration of a rescue inhaler requires nursing assessment and judgement therefore it is not a medication that can be delegated to be administered by a teacher while on a field trip. Many factors are involved regarding the need for the rescue inhaler: a respiratory assessment of the student, the student's age and capability of accurately self administering a rescue inhaler as well as monitoring the student's physical response to the inhaled medication. Field trip management discussion should begin AT THE TIME the inhaler is brought to school and when physician's order and parent permission to administer the inhaler are received at school.

Discussions between the school nurse and the parent/guardian regarding asthma management while on field trips will vary depending on the age and grade of the student. The goal is to individualize each asthma plan of care to reflect the student's knowledge of asthma, their ability to recognize signs and symptoms of respiratory distress and to identify at what level the student is at regarding self-management.

With any time away from the school building, the health and safety for *every student* on the field trip is the main priority. Children should feel well the day of the field trip and should be able to manage the demands of the day. It is with the understanding that if a student is ill or becomes ill on the field trip parents will be called to come and pick up their child.

General Guidelines

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

- Inhalers are not sent on field trips with teachers because a respiratory assessment is required before administering.
- NOTE: In general, inhalers used at school are **rescue inhalers** - for an acute episode
- If a student needs to use an inhaler during the field (acute phase of an illness - not maintenance) the student may not be healthy enough to attend
- If applicable, a student may be cleared to self-administer if:
 - 1) Documentation is received from the physician stating that the student may self-administer
 - 2) After discussion with the parent/guardian the nurse determines that the student is safe to self-administer
 - 3) Self-administering capability is reflected in the IHCP for asthma
 - 4) The school nurse will review self administration guidelines with the student before the field trip
 - 5) Teacher(s) accompanying the student on the field trip are made aware
- Asthma management plan for the student while on a field trip should be documented using the Inhaler / Field Trip Management Template

MIDDLE and HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Student at the Middle and High Schools for the most part are better able to self-administer an inhaler.

- Discuss field trip management with the parent/guardian at the time that an inhaler, physician orders and parental permission forms are received
- If applicable, a student may be cleared to self-administer if:
 - 1) Documentation is received from the physician stating that the student may self-administer
 - 2) After discussion with the parent/guardian the nurse determines that the student is safe to self-administer
 - 3) Self-administering capability is reflected in the IHCP for asthma
 - 4) The school nurse will review self administration guidelines with the student before the field trip
 - 5) Teacher(s) accompanying the student on the field trip are made aware
- Asthma management plan for the student while on the field trip should be documented using the Inhaler / Field Trip Management Template

Nursing Guidelines

- Nurse will inform parent/guardian that inhalers are not routinely sent on field trips.
- Inhalers are medications that can not be delegated.
- If applicable, a student may be deemed competent to self-administer. To determine competency to self-administer, the Healthcare provider, parent/guardian and RN's assessment must be in agreement and documented.
- Nurse informs the teachers of the student's health concerns. Accommodations will be made for parents/guardians/nurse to attend field trip if applicable.

Original: March 2018

Revised: October 2018