

Asthma Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of Annie Dennis Children's Centre's asthma policy is to provide a clear set of guidelines for staff members and parents/guardians to ensure the health and safety of all children with asthma while in the Centre's care. ADCC will educate its staff and parents/guardians to ensure that these guidelines are implemented. ADCC recognises that failure to maintain adequate and appropriate asthma management strategies may expose the Centre to legal liability.

2. Definitions

Asthma is the narrowing of the air tubes in the lungs through muscle contraction, inflammation and production of excess mucus causing difficulty in breathing. While there is currently no "cure" for asthma, correct diagnosis and adequate treatment and management of the condition will allow the majority of people with asthma to lead a full and active lifestyle. It is estimated that approximately 15% of children have currently diagnosed asthma. (Asthma Foundation of Victoria 2009)

Staff: includes permanent, agency, casual, long and short term appointments.

3. Identifying children with asthma

The Centre will seek to identify children with asthma during the enrolment process. Parents and guardians will be provided with a copy of the Centre's Asthma Policy upon enrolment and asked to complete an Asthma Action Plan if their child has asthma (see Appendix 1). The Asthma Action Plan will form part of the child's enrolment record.

4. Responsibilities for the management of children's asthma

The **Director/Deputy Director** of the Centre will ensure that:

- all staff are informed of children with asthma in their care
- at least 6 staff members have completed an accredited asthma training course
- at least one member of staff who has completed an accredited asthma training course is on duty whenever children are being cared for or educated
- an accredited staff member correctly maintains the asthma component of the First Aid Kit
- emergency asthma medication is administered, if required, according to the child's Asthma Action Plan and parents/guardians are informed whenever medication has been administered to the child
- an emergency Asthma First Aid poster is displayed in key locations
- parents and guardians are informed of any concerns should it be considered that a child's asthma is limiting his or her ability to participate fully in all activities
- Ensure that all permanent staff are aware and understand all procedures regarding the administration of medications, and

- Be responsible for implementing, enforcing and evaluating this policy.

Staff members will ensure that:

- they are aware of the children in their care with asthma
- asthma triggers are identified and, where practicable, minimised
- activities are modified, where necessary, in accordance with a child's needs
- prescribed asthma medication is administered regularly in accordance with the information in the child's Asthma Action Plan
- they promptly communicate to the Director of the Centre and to parents/guardians any incidents (asthma attacks) that required medication to be administered
- they promptly communicate to the Director of the Centre and to parents/guardians any concerns should it be considered that a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities and,
- be responsible for their personal adherence to this policy.

Parents and guardians will ensure that they:

- inform the Director of the Centre, either upon enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has a history of asthma
- provide all relevant information regarding the child's asthma via the Asthma Action Plan
- notify the Director of the Centre, in writing, of any changes to the Asthma Action Plan during the year
- ensure that their child has an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication (including reliever) at all times, and
- communicate all relevant information and concerns with the staff as the need arises, e.g. if asthma symptoms were present the previous night.

5. Breaches of this policy

Staff members who fail to adhere to the procedures set out in this policy may be liable to counseling or disciplinary action.

The **Asthma policy** is linked to the *National Early Years Learning Framework*.

Outcome 3 children have a strong sense of wellbeing:
Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical safety

Date Approved by the COM 18 October 2010

Next review date October 2012

Key Source Documents

- Asthma Victoria www.asthma.org.au (2009)