



## Mitcham Community House

# Asthma and the Child in Care Policy

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		Reviewed and updated by Childcare Subcommittee on 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	
		Next review:	11/06/2017
		Reviewed and approved by COM	11/04/18

### PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the effective management of asthma in Mitcham Community House Children's Service and to ensure that all stakeholders (Committee, management, staff, parents/carers) are aware of their obligations and best practice management of asthma at the children's service.

### Statement

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 1 in 9 Australian children<sup>1</sup>. Asthma is one of the most common reasons for child admissions to hospital, particularly in February and May.

In order to meet the legal obligations outlined in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, and to ensure the health and wellbeing of all children attending child care, this Policy is developed in recognition of the importance of staff education, implementation of best practice policy and the involvement and understanding of parents and carers of children attending child care.

Key points and obligations within the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, relevant to an asthma management policy, state that children's services must:

- Implement a health conditions policy and ensure that all staff, parents and carers and other relevant stakeholders of the children's service are provided with a copy of the policy
- Obtain health information for each child enrolled at the service, including a detailed Written Asthma Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan for children enrolled with asthma
- Keep a detailed record of medication administered to any child
- Ensure that at least one member of staff is on duty at all times with current and approved accredited asthma training
- Ensure adequate provision and maintenance of suitably equipped first aid kits

## Scope

- To ensure all stakeholders (directors, management, staff, parents/carers) are aware of their obligations and best practice management of asthma at the children's service
- To provide necessary information for the effective management of children with asthma attending the children's service

1<http://www.aihw.gov.au/asthma/>, 2Australian Centre for Asthma Monitoring (2011), "Asthma in Australia: with a focus chapter on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease", Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra 2011, 3 Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2011), Education and Care Services National Regulations, [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/sessionalview/sessional/subordleg/2011-653.pdf](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/sessionalview/sessional/subordleg/2011-653.pdf).

## AUTHORISATION

Signature of Committee Chair	
Date of approval by the Committee	



# Asthma and the Child in Care Procedures

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## PROCEDURES

Asthma management should be viewed as a shared responsibility. To this end each of the key groups within Mitcham Community House gives the following undertakings:

### Childcare Coordinator will:

Provide staff with a copy of the service's asthma policy and ensure staff are aware of asthma management strategies upon employment at the service

- Provide accredited asthma training to staff as required
- Ensure at least one staff member is on duty at all times who has completed accredited asthma training
- Provide parents/carers with a copy of the service's asthma policy upon enrolment of their child
- Identify children with asthma during the enrolment process and provide parents and carers with an written asthma plan to be completed in consultation with a medical practitioner
- Develop a risk minimisation plan for every child with asthma, in consultation with parents/carers
- Ensure that all children with asthma have an written asthma plan and a risk minimisation plan kept with their enrolment record, and ensure that both Plans are updated at least yearly
- Ensure parents and carers of all children with asthma provide reliever medication and a spacer (including a child's face mask if required) at all times their child is attending the service
- Implement an asthma first aid procedure consistent with current national recommendations
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Ensure adequate provision and maintenance of asthma first aid kits
- Ensure that each asthma first aid kit contains reliever medication (a blue/grey metered dose inhaler containing salbutamol), two spacer devices, two children's face masks, instructions for the first aid procedure, and a record form
- Ensure that reliever medications within the asthma first aid kits are regularly replaced and have not expired, and that spacers and face masks are replaced after each use

- Facilitate communication between management, staff and parents/carers regarding the service's asthma policy and strategies
- Promptly communicate with parents and carers any concerns regarding the management of children with asthma attending the service
- Identify and minimise, where possible, asthma triggers for children attending the service
- Ensure that children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that children with asthma can participate in all activities safely and to their fullest abilities
- Notify the Department of Education and Training, if a serious asthma flare up occurs; resulting in emergency services being called and/or the death of a child
- A children's service must notify the relevant regional office by telephone within 24 hours of the incident, followed by written notification as soon as practicable. Written notification is to be provided by using the Serious incident notification form available at:  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/vcsforms.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/vcsforms.aspx)

**Staff will:**

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- Be aware of the service's asthma policy
- Be aware of the asthma first aid procedure
- Identify children in their care with asthma and are able to locate where medication and personal spacers (and face masks) are stored
- Maintain current accredited approved asthma training as required
- Know where written asthma plans and asthma first aid kits are stored
- Develop a risk minimisation plan for every child with asthma, in consultation with the parents/carers
- Identify and minimise, where possible, asthma triggers for children attending the service
- Ensure that children with asthma are not discriminated against in any way
- Ensure that children with asthma can participate in activities safely and to their fullest abilities
- Promptly communicate to management, parents and carers any concerns regarding the management of children with asthma enrolled in the service

**Parents and carers will:**

- Inform staff if their child has asthma upon enrolment at the service
- Read the service's asthma policy
- Provide a copy of their child's written asthma plan to the service, ensuring it has been signed by a medical practitioner. The asthma plan should be reviewed and updated at least yearly.

- Work with staff to develop a risk minimisation plan for their child
- Provide the service with the child's reliever medication along with a spacer (and child's face mask if required) at all times the child is attending the centre
- Communicate all relevant medical/health information to management and staff of the service
- Promptly communicate any concerns or changes to their child's asthma to staff at the service
- Where possible and depending on ability, encourage their child to learn about their asthma and communicate to service staff if they are unwell or experiencing asthma symptoms

### **Asthma First Aid**

In the event that a child has asthma symptoms, follow the written first aid instructions on the child's Asthma Action/Care Plan. If no specific and signed instructions are available, the instructions are unclear, or the child does not have an Asthma Action/Care Plan, **begin the attached Asthma First Aid procedure immediately.**

**Call emergency assistance to attend (000) if:**

- **the child's asthma symptoms are severe or life-threatening**
- **the child suddenly stops breathing**
- **the child's asthma symptoms continue to worsen**
- **there is no Asthma Action/Care Plan for the child**
- **blue/grey reliever medication is not available**
- **you are unsure what is causing the breathing difficulty**

### **First time asthma attack or 'unknown' asthma**

If a child experiences difficulty breathing and is not known to have asthma, immediately commence Asthma First Aid using the reliever medication and spacer in the Asthma Emergency Kit. As soon as possible, contact emergency services on Triple Zero (000) and the parents/carer of child as per Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Regulation 94.

## Recognising an asthma attack

<b>Mild/moderate</b> Some difficulty breathing Talks in sentences Able to move around Cough or wheeze	<b>Commence Asthma First Aid</b>
<b>Severe</b> Obvious difficulty breathing Shortened sentences Tugged in skin at neck or ribs Cough or wheeze Reliever not lasting	<b>Call Ambulance- 000</b> <b>Commence Asthma First Aid</b>
<b>Life-threatening</b> Gasping for breath 1-2 words per breath Confused or exhausted Turning blue; collapsing	<b>Call Ambulance- 000</b> <b>Commence Asthma First Aid</b>

### Asthma Emergency Kits

- Asthma Emergency Kit should contain:
- Reliever medication
- X2 small volume spacer device
- X2 compatible children's face mask
- Record form
- Asthma First Aid Instructions

Please note that it is a recommendation of The Asthma Foundation of Victoria that spacers and face masks are single-person use only. It is essential to have at least two spacers and two face masks in the asthma first aid kit and that spacers and face masks are replaced each time they are used. Face masks are to be used by children unable to coordinate correct breathing through the mouthpiece of the spacer or unable to seal their lips around the mouth piece

### Further Reading and Resources

Forms and plans mentioned in this policy are available to download free of charge from the Resources section of The Asthma Foundation of Victoria website at <https://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au/vic/home>

**Related Legislation & Policy**

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2011), Education and Care Services National Regulations,

[www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/sessionalview/sessional/subordleg/2011-653.pdf](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/sessionalview/sessional/subordleg/2011-653.pdf).

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Framework (ACECQA),

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

**Related Policies:**

- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Sick/Injured Child
- Medication