

Can children with health care needs attend school, preschool and child care?

Yes

- Most children with health care needs can attend school, preschool and childcare.
- Children who need individual support from staff will need a health care plan from their doctor, nurse or therapist.
- Staff and families use the health care plan to develop a health support plan. This can take up to several weeks—and longer if facilities need changing.

What if my child needs health support?

- Parents and guardians are responsible for their children's health and welfare.
- Health professionals are responsible for medical management are care.
- Most children, as they get older, can learn some responsibility for their health care.
- Education and childcare workers are trained in basic first aid—they are not trained to provide medical care.

How can staff help?

Generally, education and childcare workers can assist with four kinds of health care support.

- **First Aid**
If you child becomes unexpectedly ill or injured, staff will:
 - administer basic first aid
 - call an ambulance if needed
 - inform you (or your emergency contacts) if first aid might need follow-up at home or with a doctor (eg head injury, excessive nose bleed, or other agreed circumstances).
- **Supervision for safety**
This can involve storage and supervision of prescribed medication and encouragement for children self-managing their health care (eg a child who can change his or her own catheter or monitor blood sugar levels).

How can staff help? (cont)

- **Personal care support**
Staff who can work with families to plan support for children who need help with hygiene, continence, eating and drinking, and transfers and positioning.
- **Protection from infection and infestation**
Staff members follow health standards to provide as much protection as they can, for all children, from the spread of infections and infestation (eg head lice).

Health support plans

- If you provide a health care plan from your doctor or other relevant health professional, staff can work with you to prepare a health support plan. The Department for Education and Child Development (ECD) has developed a health support planning form which covers additional help for:
 - first aid
 - supervision for safety
 - personal care
 - learning, behaviour and general well-being.

What can parents and guardians do?

- Make sure staff members always have reliable emergency contact information, preferably for you and at least two others.
- Make sure staff members know if your child has a health issue which could require first aid or special care, for example:
 - asthma
 - epilepsy or seizures
 - diabetes
 - severe allergy (anaphylaxis)
 - mental health issues
 - personal care support (eg assistance with continence care or eating and drinking)
 - special aids or equipment.

What can parents and guardians do? (cont)

- If your child needs individual health support, get a health care plan from the doctor. The Department for Education and Child Development has a range of forms to help you get this information.
- Work with the doctor and staff to make sure any health care plan supports your child's participation and enjoyment in the service. For example, wherever possible schedule therapy to occur at home unless it is integrated with the program at the school or centre.
- Work with staff to develop your child's health support plan (if one is needed) and keep in touch, as agreed, to make sure all is going well with the plan.
- Make sure your child has everything he or she needs each day to enable health care needs to be supported.
- Involve your child wherever possible in planning for his or her health care and taking responsibility appropriate to his or her age, skills and confidence.

Medication?

Can staff members help with medication?

Yes. They can help with medication prescribed by a doctor.

- They can help with oral and puffer medication. They can also help with nebulisers. Staff might discuss various ways of helping (eg children on nebulisers can often learn to use a puffer and spacer).
- Other medication (eg ointment, eye and ear drops, autoinjectors) requires special planning, and sometimes the help of a nurse. Please allow time for this to happen.
- Younger children should always be supervised taking medication. Older children (eg upper primary and secondary) can often learn to safely self-manage medication.
- Worksites will have rules about using medication safely, particularly relating to storage and how much medication is brought to the site.

What support do staff members need to be able to help with medication?

Staff members need to make sure that:

- the right child
- has the right medication
- and the right dose
- by the right route (eg oral or inhaled)
- at the right time, and they must
- keep a written record of this.

They need your help to do this.

How can families help with safe medication management?

Medication should be:

- prescribed by a doctor. This includes analgesics and other medication that can be bought over the counter only sent if needed. Medication that has to be taken three times per day can be taken before and after school, and before bedtime, and not come to school at all
- provided as a daily dose (or, at most, a week's supply)
- delivered in the original container, with the label from the pharmacy. You can ask your pharmacist for a second, labelled container to keep the extra medication at home
- within the use-by-date
- come with a medication authority.



child health and education support services

Further information

Schools, preschools and childcare services

Your local school principal, centre director or home-based care provider can advise how your child's health care needs can be supported while he or she is in their care.

The relevant ECD regional office staff can also assist:

- www.decd.sa.gov.au
- Telephone: 08-8226 1000 or 1800 008 158

General information about health support at school, preschool and childcare is available on the *chess* website:

www.chess.sa.edu.au

A booklet on planning support in education and childcare services can be downloaded from the ECD website or may be purchased from ECD (see website above for details, including the order form). It is called **Health support planning—in education and children's services** (DECS, 2006).

Children Youth and Women's Health Service

- ☎ Parent Helpline, telephone 1300 364 100
- ☎ Information Centre, telephone 8161 6875 see the website at www.cyh.com

Community health services

- ☎ Refer to the Yellow Pages www.yellowpages.com.au for your nearest community health service.

The HealthSA website can be searched for health information at www.healthysa.sa.gov.au

Ask your doctor or other health service providers about your child's particular health issues.

for families

health support



Planning in education and children's services



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development