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ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS POLICY 2012

National Quality Standard: QA2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.2.1 (see footnote for definition)

Policy: Educators will facilitate effective care and health management of children who are taking medications for health problems, prevention and management of acute episodes of illness or medical emergencies by the safe administration of medication, and compliance with the National Regulations and Law.

Background: Studies of children in care have found that on any one day 5% are on medication for an illness, mostly for asthma, respiratory or ear infections, or allergies, and in a month, half will have been on over-the-counter medication for colds or allergies. Many children have chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and allergies and may be at risk of a medical emergency while in care and require emergency treatment or medication.

Relevant Legislation:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Regulation 92-96, 178, 181-184)
- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Bill 2010 (Section 167)
- Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1996 (NSV19)
- Public Health Act 1991 (NSM)
- Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000 & Regulations 2001 (NSW)

Key Resources:

- Staying Healthy in ChildCare, NHMRC, 4th Edition December 2005
www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/ch43syn.htm

Practices:

To facilitate effective care and health management of children who are taking medication for a health problem, prevention and management of acute episodes of illness or medical emergencies requiring administration of medication:

Co-ordination Unit Staff will:

- Provide the parents with relevant information about FDC health management policies and practices when starting FDC and regularly after that through newsletters.
- Provide resources and information to educators and parents on health matters when required.
- Provide forms for educators to record relevant health and medication details.
- Support parents and educators when dealing with health management matters.
- Keep up to date on current health management practices.

Educator's will:

- Ensure medication is administered to a child only from its original container before the expiry or use-by date. In accordance with any instructions attached to the medication or provided by a registered medical practitioner for prescribed medication from a container that bears the original label with the name of the child to whom it is prescribed.
- Ensure families provide a summary of the child's health, medications, allergies to medication or other substances, the doctor's name, address and phone number, and a Medical Action Plan approved by their doctor if relevant, following enrolment and prior to the child starting in the service.
- Ensure medication is only administered to a child enrolled in the service with the written permission of the child's parent or legal guardian.
- In relation to administering medications, educators must ensure:
 - they are adequately trained by an appropriate person,
 - they comply with all regulations, policies and guidelines,
 - prior written parental consent is obtained wherever possible,
 - they act in the best interests of the safety and health of the child.
- If an educator or staff member feels in doubt about the safety of administering any medication or treatment, the educator or staff member should not administer the medication or treatment and refer the matter to the Scheme Coordinator and seek advice from the parent, doctor, or the local Public Health Unit.
- Before administering medication, check that the instructions on the Medication Authority Form are consistent with both the doctor's instructions and the name and instructions on the label. If there is any doubt or inconsistency, the educator or Scheme Coordinator should check with the doctor or pharmacist, and advise the parent if it is considered the medication should not be administered.
- Details of the administration must be recorded and signed for every child and for each medication.
- Medication records are required to be kept by both the scheme and the educator until the end of 3 years after the child's last attendance.
- Where possible, for children who live in two family homes, obtain a Medical Authority form from a family member from both homes.
- Advise parents and families that the administration of homeopathic, naturopathic, over-the-counter or non-prescribed medications (including cold preparations and paracetamol) also needs to meet minimum legislative requirements and these guidelines include providing a Medication Authority Form, written instructions and dosage from a health professional prescribing or dispensing the medication. Do not give any unidentifiable medicine, or medicine that doesn't meet the above guidelines.
- Be aware that homeopathic, naturopathic, herbal and over-the-counter medications also have adverse effects and risks.
- Be aware that antibiotic resistance is an emerging problem for children in child care, and educators administering antibiotics should ensure that they are administered according to instructions and until the course is completed.
- If any medical or first aid information, instructions or medication labels are written in a language other than English, ask the family to obtain an English version from their doctor or pharmacist to provide to the educator.
- In the case of medication being required in an emergency it is acceptable to obtain verbal consent from the child's parent or legal guardian, or from a registered medical practitioner, or medical emergency service. In any emergency, if the child's parent cannot be contacted, in the case of an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency medication may be administered to a child without authorisation. In these circumstances the

child's parent and emergency service must be contacted as soon as possible.

- Ensure families and educators understand and acknowledge each other's responsibilities under the relevant legislation, the scheme policy and these guidelines.
- Advise parents who leave medication to be administered without meeting the conditions of the relevant legislation and these guidelines that the medications will not be administered, and medication prescribed for one child will not be administered to a sibling or another child.
- Be informed of any child enrolled who has a chronic health problem such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, severe allergy, food allergy or anaphylaxis, requires ongoing medication, or might require emergency medication, treatment or first aid. Ensure you have a copy of a medical action plan by a recognised authority.
- Ensure medication is securely stored in a locked cupboard away from access by children. Medication that requires refrigeration (e.g. eye drops, antibiotics, syrups) should be stored at the back of the top shelf, in a separate compartment, or in a childproof container (Dangerous Chemicals, Substances & Equipment).
- If any emergency arises where there is doubt or concerns about the child's safety, the educator must act in the best interests of the child's safety and health, by contacting the family, a doctor, the Authorised Supervisor, or call 000 for an ambulance. (Procedure for Calling an Ambulance).

It is the responsibility of the family to:

- Provide a summary of the child's health, medications, allergies, doctor's name, address and phone number, a medical action plan approved by a Doctor if available to the Ballina Byron Family Day Care office and educator prior to starting care and ongoing as required.
- Keep the Ballina Byron Family Day Care office and educator up to date with any change to a child's medical condition or medical action plan.
- Provide medication in its original packaging.
- Complete the Medical Authority Form authorizing the educator to administer medication to their child, on a daily basis as required.

Policy Created: November 2005

Policy Reviewed: April 2008, February 2010, 1st May 2012

Policy Ratified at Committee Meeting (date)

Signed: Title:

NQS Definitions:

QA2 – Children's health and safety.

6.1 – Respectful supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained.

6.2 – Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected.

6.2.1 – The expertise of families is recognized and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing.