



## Center for Disabilities

### Healthcare Plan Toolkit: Healthcare Plan Overview

#### What is a healthcare plan?

Healthcare plans are written plans used in the school setting to communicate a student's health condition and their care/accommodations.

#### Who writes a healthcare plan?

Development of a healthcare plan is a nurse responsibility and is based on standards of care regulated by state nurse practice acts. Healthcare plan development cannot be delegated to unlicensed individuals. It is the responsibility of the school nurse to evaluate the healthcare plan at least annually, and as changes in health status occur to determine the need for revision and evidence of desired student outcomes (National Association School Nurses, 2015).

#### Which students require a healthcare plan?

Healthcare plans are used for a variety of emergent and non-emergent health conditions. Healthcare plans are not dependent on the type of health condition, but rather the need for staff knowledge of the condition as well as the need for intervention in the school setting. The school nurse must work with the parent, student, and physician to determine what cares are required in school setting. The following information may be used to guide the school nurse staff in determining if a care plan is needed.

- The student has a condition that requires scheduled daily medication, cares/accommodations during the school day.  
**Healthcare plan needed** (i.e. but not limited to a student with ADHD medication at school, student with catheter cares at school, student with tube feeding at school)
- The student has a potentially life threatening condition that requires as needed medication, cares/ accommodations  
**Healthcare plan needed** (i.e. but not limited to student with medication for anaphylaxis allergy, student with medication at school for seizure disorder, student with medication at school for severe asthma)
- The student has a condition that requires as needed medication, cares/ accommodations.  
**The need for a healthcare plan is made on an individual basis according to the need for cares at school.** (i.e. student with medication at school for migraines, student with medication for seasonal allergies. These students may not need a plan if these conditions are mild, do not happen frequently and/or no other accommodations are needed. Conversely these students may have frequent needs related to these conditions and accommodations may be needed. In these cases a healthcare plan would be needed.)

#### Who is involved in developing a healthcare plan?

Healthcare plans should be developed with information and input from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), physician, school nurse and school staff. As appropriate and depending on the student's age the student may also be included in the healthcare plan development.

#### **What should be included in a healthcare plan?**

A healthcare plan should be comprehensive, and should clearly and concisely outline the student's health condition, nursing diagnosis, goals for the student's care, assessment/ signs and symptoms of the condition, the interventions/plan of action, outcomes for the student, and an evaluation of the plan. Please see the "healthcare plan development for school nurses" document for further detail.

#### **Who should utilize/follow a student's healthcare plan?**

Any staff member who is responsible for knowing of the student's health condition and how to respond or accommodate the student should be provided the healthcare plan. The nurse should provide the appropriate staff with a copy of the plan and should check for staff understanding of the plan. The nurse should provide appropriate training if needed. Training may be documented on the evaluation portion of the plan.

#### **How are healthcare plans used in a school?**

Healthcare plans must be provided to staff who are responsible for carrying out the plan. Once distributed, staff should utilize and adhere to the plan as written. If at any time staff do not feel the plan can be carried out as written, they should notify the nurse.

If the nurse is notified that the plan cannot be carried out as written, the nurse should then determine if additional training is needed for the staff, if a meeting should be held with parents and staff to discuss possible changes to the plan, or if the student's condition has changed which would warrant further medical advice and a revision to the plan.

#### **Do healthcare plans have legal implications?**

Healthcare plans are subject to state nursing practice acts laws and often healthcare plans become part of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan, and would then be subject to the applicable education or civil rights law. If a student has a condition that warrants a healthcare plan a 504 or a special education evaluation should be considered.

#### **References**

National Association of School Nurses. (2015). *Individualized healthcare plans: The role of the school nurse* (Position Statement). Silver Spring, MD: Author.

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