

\*\*\*\* Important \*\*\*\*

**A child with diagnosed Asthma cannot commence enrolment until:**

- Centre has a current medical management plan that has been prepared and authorised (date and signed) by a doctor.
- A Risk Minimisation Plan has been developed and documented.
- A communication plan has been implemented and documented as per page 2 of Medical Conditions Checklist.

#### What is Asthma?

Asthma is a medical condition that affects the airways (the breathing tubes that carry air into our lungs). Symptoms include wheezing (a high-pitched sound coming from the chest while breathing), a feeling of not being able to get enough air or being short of breath, a feeling of tightness in the chest and coughing. Asthma triggers may include exercise, cigarette smoke, colds, flu, thunderstorms\* and allergen exposure.

#### Teacher/educator responsibilities

- Store medication and spacer (if applicable):
  - in a clean environment
  - out of direct sunlight or heat
  - not in the refrigerator
  - in zip lock bag or container clearly labelled with child's name
  - in a known location (clearly signed), inaccessible to children but easily accessible to educators
- During a storm, stay inside, with window and doors shut. Closely observe children for signs and symptoms of Asthma.

#### Asthma First Aid

- Follow child's medical management plan if applicable.
- If unsure child is having an Asthmatic episode and/or child does not have an Asthma diagnosis, follow below first aid steps, telephone 000 and follow operator instructions.
  - Follow DRSABC.
  - Sit the child upright. Be calm and reassuring.
  - Do not leave the child unattended.
  - Administer 4 reliever (blue/grey) puffs via spacer. Administer 1 puff at a time with 4 breaths after each puff.
  - Wait 4 minutes. If child still cannot breathe normally, administer 4 more puffs of reliever; 1 puff at a time using a spacer.
  - If there is no improvement, administer 4 more separate puffs of reliever as above.
  - Keep administering 4 puffs every 4 minutes (as above) until ambulances arrives.

#### Asthma Emergency

- Telephone 000 for an ambulance, and follow operator instructions if child displays the following:

○ symptoms get worse very quickly	○ pallor, sweating	○ unable to speak normally
○ little or no relief from inhaler	○ progressively more anxious, subdued or panicky	○ loss of consciousness
○ severe shortness of breath	○ blue lips, face, earlobes, fingernails	○ focused only on breathing
- If child is Asthmatic, follow Medical Management Plan.
- If undiagnosed and parent/guardian written authorisation to administer emergency medication has NOT been provided, advise the 000 operator and follow their instructions.

In an asthma emergency, C&K employees with current first aid qualifications are permitted to administer appropriate emergency medication without parent consent (*s94 - Exception to authorisation requirement— anaphylaxis or asthma emergency*). This exception can be relied upon even where a parent has responded "No" to the administration of Ventolin consent questions in the child's Enrolment Booklet/Online Form.

- It is important to note that, s94 requires:
  - (a) the centre **must** notify emergency services; and
  - (b) the centre **must** notify the child's parent as soon as practicable.

#### References

- National Asthma Council Australia (2021): My Asthma Guide