



ASTHMA POLICY

(M)

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

Outlets Co-operative Neighbourhood House LTD is committed to raising awareness about asthma among the Committee, staff, parents/guardians of children attending the Centre Providing a safe and healthy environment for all children enrolled in the childcare department and providing an environment in which all children with asthma can participate in order to reach their full potential.

This policy will provide a clear set of guidelines and expectations to be followed with regard to the management of asthma.

The aim of this policy is for all children with asthma enrolled at Outlets to receive appropriate attention as required and to respond to the needs of children who have not been diagnosed with asthma and who have an asthma attack whilst in our care.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children enrolled at the kindergarten, their parents/guardians, the staff, and Committee.

Background and Relevant Legislation

Asthma is a chronic health condition affecting approximately 15% of children. It is one of the most common reasons for childhood admission to hospital. Education and correct management will assist in minimising the impact of asthma.

It is generally accepted that children under the age of six do not have the skills and ability to recognise and manage their own asthma effectively. With this in mind, Outlets recognises the need to educate the staff and parents/guardians about asthma and to promote responsible asthma management strategies.

- The Children's Services Act 1996
- The Children's Services Regulations 32/2020
- The Occupational Health & Safety Act 1998
- The Health Act 1958

DEFINITIONS

Metered Dose Inhaler (puffer): Common delivery device used to administer reliever medication.

Asthma Emergency: The onset of unstable or deteriorating asthma symptoms requiring immediate treatment with reliever medication.

Asthma Action Plan: A record of information on the child's asthma and how to manage it, including contact details, what to do when the child's asthma worsens and emergency treatment.

Asthma triggers: Things that may induce asthma symptoms eg. pollens, colds/viruses, dust mites, smoke, exercise, etc. Asthma triggers will vary from child to child.

Puffer: Common name for a metered dose inhaler.



Reliever Medication: This comes in a blue container and is used to relax the muscles around the airways to relieve asthma symptoms e.g. *Airomir, Asmol, Epaq or Ventolin*.

Spacer device: A plastic device used to increase the efficiency of delivery of asthma medication from a puffer. It may be used in conjunction with a facemask.

PROCEDURES

The Committee of management and/or Licencee at Outlets Co-operative Neighbourhood House Ltd will:

- Where appropriate, organise Emergency Asthma Management training for staff.
- Where appropriate, organise asthma management information sessions for parents/guardians of children enrolled at the kindergarten.
- Encourage open communication between parents/guardians and staff regarding the status and impact of a child's asthma.

The staff responsible for the care of children at Outlets will:

- Ask all parents/guardians as part of the enrolment procedure, prior to their child's attendance, whether the child has been diagnosed with asthma and document this information on the child's enrolment record.
- Provide families whose child has asthma with an Asthma Action and management Plan to complete in consultation with their doctor. On completion, this will be attached to the child's enrolment record and displayed in Creche.
- Display the Asthma Foundation of Victoria's *Asthma First Aid* posters in key locations at the centre, for example, in the children's room, bathroom and kitchen.
- Ensure that all parents/guardians with a child diagnosed with asthma bring their medications and any asthma devices ready for use.
- Consult with the parent/guardians of children with asthma, in relation to the health and safety of their child and the supervised management of the child's asthma.
- Identify and, where possible, minimise asthma triggers as defined in the definition section of the policy or in children's Asthma Action Plans.
- Promptly communicate any concerns to parents if it is considered that a child's asthma is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities.
- Where necessary, modify activities for the child with asthma in accordance with their current needs and abilities.
- Administer all regular prescribed asthma medication in accordance with the Medication Book.

Parents/guardians of a child with asthma will:

- Inform staff, either on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has a history of asthma.
- Provide all relevant information regarding the child's asthma via the Asthma Action management Plan.
- Notify the staff, in writing, of any changes to the information they entered on the Asthma Action management Plan during the year, if this occurs.
- Provide an adequate supply of appropriate asthma medication and equipment (eg. blue reliever medication and spacer) for their child at all times.



- Communicate all relevant information and concerns to staff as the need arises (eg. if asthma symptoms were present the previous night).
- Consult with the staff, in relation to the health and safety of their child and the supervised management of the child's asthma.

Plan of action for a child with diagnosed asthma

The staff, together with the parents/guardians of a child with asthma, will discuss and agree on a plan of action for the emergency management of an asthma attack based on the 4 Step Asthma First Aid Plan. This plan will be included as part of, or attached to, the child's Asthma Action management Plan and enrolment record.

Action to be taken if a child suddenly collapses or has difficulty breathing with a possible asthma attack.

For Children with a known asthma condition:

- Staff will follow the agreed plan of action for the child for the emergency treatment of an asthma attack as detailed in the Asthma Action management Plan.
- If the child's Asthma Action Plan is not available trained staff (have completed a course in Emergency Asthma management) should immediately commence the standard asthma emergency protocol as outlined by the Asthma Foundation:
 - Step 1: Sit the child upright and remain calm to reassure them.
 - Step 2: Without delay shake the blue reliever puffer (inhaler) and give 4 separate puffs through the spacer. Use one puff at a time and ask the child to take 4 breaths from the spacer after each puff.
 - Step 3: Wait 4 minutes. If there is no improvement repeat step 2
 - Step 4: If still no improvement after a further 4 minutes call an ambulance immediately and state clearly that the child is having an asthma attack.
- Follow emergency services instructions.
- In an emergency the blue reliever puffer may be their own or borrowed from another child.

For Children who staff are not aware have pre-existing asthma or where a trained staff member is not available:

In this situation, staff will treat according to emergency policy and:

- Step 1: Call an ambulance immediately (dial 000) and state that the child is having breathing difficulty.
- Follow emergency services instructions.

4. Related documents and policies

- Child enrolment procedure
- Emergency Policy
- Hygiene Policy
- Medication from
- Asthma action management plan
- Accident, Illness Policy
- www.asthmaaustralia.org.au
- Emergency asthma management training
- First aid certificates



ATTACHMENTS (NIL)

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Outlets Co-operative Neighbourhood House LTD on 23/07/2002

REVIEW DATE: 23/05/2023