

Medication Policy

Interchange Outer East (IOE) supports many participants with the administration of medication. It is crucial to have a policy which highlights clear guidelines to support all members of the IOE community including participants, families, staff and volunteers. It is important that everyone understands their role and responsibilities surrounding all aspects of medication, including safe and timely administration, handling, recording and storing of medication and emergency procedures surrounding medication.

Staff Responsibilities:

All staff at IOE are required to undertake first aid and medication administration training. These highlight safe handling and administration of medication as well as the correct procedures required to record administration of medication and safe storage procedures of medication before they are able to support participants.

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that their training is current and meets the requirements of the participants that they are supporting. They must ensure that all medication they are required to handle is labeled, dated correctly, in a Webster Pak (tablets and capsules) or original packaging (liquids, powders, ointments, lotions) and that it has been signed off by families. It is also a requirement that if staff members are unsure of issues surrounding medication, they seek support from their coordinator, team leader or call the emergency after hours phone for support.

Staff members have the right to refuse participants access to group based activities if there are issues with unlabeled medication, medication that is not in a Webster Pak or original packaging (liquids, powders, ointments, lotions) and medication that is not documented appropriately (such as changes of dose by a doctor).

Family Responsibilities:

Families have the right to feel confident and supported by staff at IOE in relation to administering medication to their family members.

The role of family members is to provide staff with as much relevant information as possible surrounding their family members medication needs, to support staff in developing accurate support information for their family member.

It is the responsibility of families to ensure that staff are kept up to date with medication information and supply staff with current documentation of medications, route, doses and dose changes, emergency management plans (EMPs) as well as ensuring that all medication is provided in a Webster Pak or in original packaging for liquids, powders, ointments and lotions.

Classes and Forms of Medication:

Medications may include tablets or capsules, drops, liquids, ointments, lotions, powders or sprays and may be administered orally, through gastrostomy tubes, inhaled, applied, patches, topically, rectally, nasally or injected.

- Medication prescribed to modify behaviour is classified as a chemical restraint and is subject to staff following '*restrictive intervention*' procedures (see restrictive intervention guideline).
- Prescribed medication is taken to treat specific medical conditions or to control behaviour.
- PRN – pro re nata or '*as required*' medications can be both prescribed and non-prescribed medications such as over the counter paracetamol or emergency medication to stop seizures or anaphylactic reactions.
- Non-prescribed medication is taken to support the individual's general health.
- Medications include any herbal supplements and/or vitamins.
- Emergency management medications such as Midazolam and Epipens are used in response to emergency situations and must be supported with an emergency management plan (EMP) and appropriate staff training.

All medications, both prescribed and non-prescribed need to be meticulously recorded on the medication sheet for correct dosage, time and route of administration, along with any allergies the individual has.

IOE staff that administer either emergency medications or medication via gastrostomy tubes, injection or rectally, are required to have specialist training.

Receiving Medication:

On group based services (day programs, camps and activities), all medication must be handed to staff in a Webster Pak prepared by a pharmacy. The following exceptions apply:

- If the medication is in a form other than tablets or capsules (such as liquid, drops, ointments, powders, etc.);
- PRN medication (e.g Panadol); or
- Where an individual has been offered a place on an activity within 24 hours of the activity.

In all exempted cases, the family must provide medication in its original packaging. Medication sheet needs to be completed and signed.

In cases where there is financial hardship and the cost of a Webster Pak places undue financial strain on a family, some special arrangements may be considered to assist with the cost or adherence to the policy after consultation with a team leader.

The preference is for Webster Paks to be available to staff when working on 1:1 shifts and in home support. If it is not general practice for families to use Webster Paks in the home, staff are to dispense medication from the original packaging which should match the medication sheet.

IOE acknowledges that doctors and parents regularly consult, often resulting in changes to

medication dosages. Where there is a difference between what is on a medication sheet and original packaging, there is an expectation that families dispense the medication in front of the support worker and that together, they check the medication sheet to ensure that it matches before leaving the family home.

If individuals come to a group-based service without their medication in a Webster Pack, families/carers will be contacted. The aim is then to come to an agreement on how the medication can be provided in a Webster Pack. In cases where no agreement can be made, the individual will not be able to access the intended activity and parents/carers will be asked to take them home.

Groups going on interstate or overseas holidays facilitated by IOE staff or volunteers are required to have all medication dispensed into a Webster Pack or original packaging (cream, liquids) and provided to IOE at least one week before the trip leaves. It is preferred that an additional three days of medication is provided in case of travel delays. It is essential that staff have the ability to go through the Webster Pack or medication in original packaging in relation to a medication sheet and where discrepancies are found that there is time for the discrepancy to be addressed.

Travelling with liquid medication should be done with consideration to 'carry on limits', as it will be a requirement to carry it in the original packaging. If required to carry medication in the cabin, a doctor's letter would be required, stating when and why the dose is required. Travel agents or airlines can provide specific information related to the trip.

Please note that some medications are illegal or restricted in other countries: however, accompanied with a doctor's letter with clear instructions for use, may be accepted. It is the responsibility of the family to research this or discuss with staff well in advance.

Recording:

All medication administered to an individual in the care of IOE must be recorded on the individual's medication sheet. The medication sheet contains the medication/s, dosages, method of preparation, time, route of administration, PRN medications and any allergies.

The information contained on the medication sheet must match what is recorded on the original container or Webster Pak for prescribed medications and match the recommended dose specific to the individual for non-prescribed medications. Prior to the commencement of activities and shifts, the individual/parent/guardian must sign the medication sheet to confirm the information is correct. If a parent/guardian is not dropping the individual to the activity, confirmation of what is on the medication sheet will be made over the phone prior to the activity. A rec leader on the activity will sign off stating that the medication was received and checked on the day. If the Webster Pak or original packaging doesn't collate with the medication sheet, contact will be made with the parent or guardian immediately to clarify details and or discuss required actions.

The medication sheet is also used to record when and who administered the medication and must be signed for every medication administered.

On 1:1 shifts, medication may be administered from the original container. All completed medication sheets must be forwarded to the relevant IOE coordinator at or before the end

of the month in which the administration took place. If no medication sheet is available, staff are to write all details that are included on the medication sheet, sign it and forward this to the coordinator.

Medication sheets must be completed within all areas of IOE and are not exclusive to camps and day activities. It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure they have adequate copies.

Storage of Medication:

All medication requires safe storage to prevent loss and to avoid accidental ingestion by individuals, regardless of the situation and location.

On group-based services all medication must be stored in a locked bag that can only be opened by staff members. This includes staff and volunteers' personal medications. Medication that requires refrigeration must also be stored in a lockable container in the fridge. During the administration of medication, it is important to keep the medication bag secure and out of reach of individuals on the activity. When not in use, the medication bag should be stored out of reach of individuals.

On 1:1 shifts, IOE acknowledges that storage of medication is more difficult; it is therefore the staff member's responsibility to ensure that during their time with the individual requiring medication, that the medication is stored in a safe manner, limiting the individuals access to it. Having the medication locked away would be the preference.

PRN Medication:

Pro re nata (PRN) medication is medication to be administered as required. Some individuals require PRN medication for specific conditions (for example, epilepsy or asthma) whilst other require PRN medication for general conditions (for example, paracetamol for a temperature/pain). All PRN medication (tablets, capsules) for group based activities is to be sent in a Webster Pak.

For prescribed and non-prescribed medications, detailed written instructions must be given by the prescribing doctor and/or parent/guardian regarding the exact circumstances under which PRN medication is to be administered. These directions must be strictly followed by all staff, on activities or on shifts.

PRN medication for specific medical conditions requires management plans; in particular, asthma, epilepsy and diabetes. Where PRN requires staff to administer injections or rectal medications, staff must meet the criteria stated in the 'meeting individual medical needs policy and procedure'.

For some individuals, medication that modifies behaviour is classed as a chemical restraint (restrictive intervention) and may be prescribed as PRN. A current behaviour support plan must be completed and clearly state the instructions on the exact circumstances in which to administer the medication. As this is a restrictive intervention, staff are required to follow specific procedures prior to, during, and post administration of this type of PRN medication. An incident report must be submitted if PRN restrictive intervention medication has been administered, regardless of whether or not that PRN restrictive intervention is included in a current, approved, behaviour support plan.

Individuals who self-administer:

The decision around who can self-administer medication on group-based programs is made collaboratively between individuals, parents and coordinators. Individuals who are able to self-administer medication are required to give staff their medication in a zip lock bag that is labelled with their name and date of birth at the commencement of a group-based activity. Staff will then hand this back to individuals upon request of the individual. Those who self-administer medication take sole responsibility for their administration and take it without prompting or reminding from staff/volunteers. IOE staff are not required to sign a completed medication sheet for individuals who self-administer their medication and are not responsible for any medication that is missed or not taken according to instructions.

All medication forms are required to be up to date with all current medications so that the staff can assist any emergency medical staff with a list of medication and dosage if required.

If an individual requires any prompting or reminding to take their medication the above IOE medication policy still applies. For participants self-administering while participating in an IOE activity consider the following points;

- The age of the participant. A child under the age of 18 will not self-administer on a group based program.
- Is the participant aware of the medication that is required and the purpose and effect of the medication?
- Can the participant access their medication out of their Webster pack, dosette box or original packaging without assistance?
- Is the participant able to remember to take their medication without prompting each time it is due?
- Can the participant safely determine the need and then self-administer PRN medication?
- Can the participant administer the correct dose every time without assistance?
- Does the participant understand the risk of missing or taking an incorrect dose of medication?

Coordinators should document in the participant case notes an overview of the discussion with the participant/family and any agreements made with the family.