ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICATIONS

Code **JLCD-R** *Issued* **11/24**

The procedures detailed below must be followed when assisting students with medication.

Any reference to a school nurse means either a registered nurse (RN) or a licensed practical nurse (LPN) if an RN is available on call by telecommunications.

Assisting with medication includes the acts of:

- reminding an individual of the time to take a medication
- opening the medicine container that is properly labeled
- assisting the individual to place the medication in the mouth or properly apply the medication

Assisting with medication does not include administration of injectable medications, insulin in any form, instillation of medications into the eye or ear, or insertion of medicine rectally or vaginally. Note that there are some exceptions to these limitations in the case of emergency as described in policy JLCE, *First Aid and Emergency Care* and JLCDB, *Use of Lifesaving Medication*.

The following acts constitute the administration of medication, and only licensed medical professionals may engage in these practices:

- preparing and giving drugs according to a medical provider's orders
- observing, recording, and reporting desired effects, untoward reactions, and side effects of drug therapy
- intervening when emergency care is required as a result of drug therapy
- instructing a student regarding medication
- recognizing accepted prescription limits
- reporting deviations to the prescribing medical provider

Before the nurse or his/her selected, trained, and evaluated designee will assist a student with medication, the student must submit a dated request to the school office signed by his/her parent/legal guardian to include the following information:

- child's name
- physician's name and signature
- name of the medication
- time to be administered
- dosage
- possible side effects
- reason for medication or medical condition
- authorization for the school nurse and, if appropriate, his/her designee who may not be a licensed medical professional, to administer the medication

The student must bring a request slip for each new or different medication. The school district retains the discretion to reject requests for assisting students with medication.

One permission slip per year will suffice for prescription medications which will be given on a long-term basis or those medications which must be administered in case of an emergency; for example, Epinephrine for allergic reactions. All changes in dosage during the year will require a new permission form. Parents/Legal guardians must inform the school nurse of any change in the student's health or change in medication.

The school nurse will keep a record of all instances when a student is assisted with medication. The parent/legal guardian will reclaim any unused medications within one week of the termination of treatment or on the last day of school. The school will destroy any unused medications after this time.

The school nurse or his/her designee will be responsible for the safekeeping of the medication to be administered to a student at school. Medication will be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer which is accessible only by the school nurse or his/her designee.

Controlled substances, as defined by state law should be counted upon receipt and monthly thereafter to ensure doses have been administered according to the prescription on the school days attended. Discrepancies in the number of units of medication should be documented in the student's medication record and reported to the school nurse, who will investigate and take appropriate corrective action. Local law enforcement authorities and the Department of Health and Environmental Control Bureau of Drug Control should be notified if drug diversion is suspected.

Neither the school district nor its personnel will be responsible for the occurrence of any adverse drug reaction when the medication has been given in the manner prescribed.

Assistance by Unlicensed School Personnel

School staff not holding a medical license that have been selected, trained, and evaluated by the school nurse as required by state law and South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation guidance are authorized to assist a student with regularly scheduled medications during school-sponsored events only if the RN assigned to the school is absent or not-available. The skills taught by the RN assigned to the school are not transferable to students for which they have not been assigned to assist and are not delegable to other individuals.

The principal, upon receipt of a list of trained school staff from the school nurse, may designate specific individuals to assist with a student's medication. At least one qualified individual will be present at school on a daily basis, and the school nurse must be available by telecommunications. Substitutes and volunteers may not assist students with medication.

Unlicensed school staff members are not permitted to assist students with an initial dose of a routinely scheduled medication due to the risks associated with potential allergic reactions.

Parents/Legal guardians must provide written authorization for unlicensed school staff members to assist a student with medication and must be provided guidance on the difference between administering medication and assisting with medication.

Following an instance where an unlicensed school staff member has assisted students with medications, the school nurse assigned to the school should perform a post-procedural review and document the results in the staff member's training file.

Unlicensed school staff members must be re-trained as needed, at minimum annually.

Student Possession of Medication

Students are not allowed to bring medications to school except as explicitly described in this rule.

All medication must be properly labeled and in its original container and must be immediately brought to the school nurse upon the student's arrival at school.

Any medication found in a student's possession during the school day will be confiscated by school personnel, and the school principal will take necessary disciplinary action. Exceptions to this prohibition against students possessing medication at school will be made on a case-by-case basis for documented medical reasons.

Adopted 4/10/06; Issued 3/4/13; Revised 11/24