

PICTON HIGH SCHOOL

Creating Opportunities Achieving Success



Important information for parents of children who do not already carry their own medication for anaphylaxis or asthma

Dear Parent

We are strongly committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of our students at this school.

We know that this is best achieved when we keep you informed and work in partnership with both you and, where possible, your children. I am writing to you today about an important health issue.

In May 2011, a 16 year old boy died after having an anaphylactic reaction at his NSW government high school. An inquest was held into his tragic death in December 2012.

The NSW State Coroner made a number of recommendations to the NSW Minister for Education at the end of the inquest. I am writing to you today about one of those recommendations.

The Coroner made a recommendation about students carrying their own EpiPen[®], Anapen[®] or asthma reliever medication to and at school

She recommended that high school aged children with asthma and/or allergies be actively encouraged to carry their EpiPen[®] or Anapen[®] and/or asthma reliever medication with them to school and at school. This would be in addition to any medication you provide us to use if your child needs our help.

For some students in their upper primary years it may also be appropriate for them to carry their own medication to and at school.

I know that not every school student will be ready to do this now.

Please seriously consider whether your son or daughter should carry their adrenaline autoinjectors or asthma reliever medication with them to school.

If you are not sure about this - who can you talk to?

Talk to your child's doctor if you have any doubts or concerns.

Is there anything you should tell your child if he or she is carrying their own EpiPen[®], Anapen[®] or asthma reliever to school?

Yes - please remind him or her to:

- carry their EpiPen[®], Anapen[®] or asthma reliever medication with them to and at school each day;
- keep a copy of their *ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis* with their EpiPen[®], Anapen[®]; and/or keep their Asthma Action plan with their reliever medication;
- know how and when this medication should be used;

- keep their medication with them in an easily accessible and identifiable spot. For example some parents have bought pouches so their children can carry around their EpiPen® or Anapen® wherever they go;
- tell a teacher immediately if they start to feel unwell or sick at school. Please tell them this won't get them into trouble if they do this;
- tell you immediately if their medication is used, lost or misplaced or is nearing its expiration date; and
- carry their EpiPen®, Anapen® or asthma reliever medication with them on all school excursions, training at TAFE and any work experience or structured work place learning your child is involved in.

We in the school will tell your child the same things.

You will still need to provide the school with an EpiPen®, Anapen® or asthma reliever medication

The school still needs you to provide at least one additional EpiPen®, Anapen® and/or asthma reliever medication for your child in case we need it in an emergency. This could happen, for example, if your child doesn't have theirs with them at school when it is needed. We will store it in a central location in the school and use it to help your child if needed.

It is important to tell the school if your child is carrying their own EpiPen®, Anapen® and/or asthma reliever medication

The school needs to know that your child carries their own medication. This will be important in the event of an emergency.

You can get further information about anaphylaxis from:

- The Department of Education and Communities
www.schools.nsw.edu.au/student-support/student-health/conditions/anaphylaxis/index.php
- The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy
www.allergy.org.au
- The NSW Ministry of Health
www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/general/allergies.html
- Allergy and Anaphylaxis Australia
www.allergyfacts.org.au

You can get further information about asthma from:

- Physical as anything.com
http://physicalasanything.com.au/lo/asthma_004/index.htm
- the Asthma Foundation
www.asthmafoundation.org.au/
- the NSW Ministry of Health
www.health.nsw.gov.au/topics/asthma.asp

How do you arrange for your child to carry their own EpiPen[®], Anapen[®] or asthma reliever medication to and at school?

Please complete the attached form and return it to the school.

If you have any questions in relation to this letter please contact the school on 4677 1242.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Sapsed
Principal