



October 22, 2013

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To:

Integrated Primary, Acute and Community Care Committee
Health Authority Pediatric Planners/Leads
Pediatric Diabetes Clinics/ Endocrinologists
BC College of Family Physicians
Society of General Practitioners
British Columbia Pediatric Society
Health Authority Contract Managers for Nursing Support Services
Child Health BC Provincial Steering Committee
Vice Presidents Public Health Committee
Provincial Public Health Committee
Provincial Prevention Directors Council

Re: In-School Supports for Students with Type 1 Diabetes

We are writing to inform you of a recent decision by government regarding changes in the provision of supports for children with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) while they are attending school.

Appropriate diabetes care in the school setting is important for the child's immediate safety, long term well-being and optimal academic performance. It also contributes to the creation of a safe, inclusive school environment.

T1D is one of the most common chronic conditions among children, with approximately 2,000 young people affected in British Columbia. Children with diabetes are increasingly being treated with intensive insulin regimes that require frequent injections and monitoring. It is estimated there are approximately 350 students who may require assistance with monitoring and administering insulin during school hours.

As such, there are increasing requests by parents that school staff be trained to directly administer insulin where a student is not independent in the task, and that school staff be trained to respond in the case of a hypoglycemic emergency.

In response to these changes, and recommendations from an independent Child Health BC report, <http://www.childhealthbc.ca/> the Ministries of Health, Education and Children and Family Development have determined that additional supports for students with diabetes will be provided during school hours by trained school staff.

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Specifically:

- Starting January 2014, health authorities will train designated school staff in the administration of glucagon as an emergency response to severe hypoglycemia. Health authorities will identify staff responsible for providing glucagon training for each school district. The school districts and health authority staff will coordinate training at the school level. Provincial training materials and information will be provided by the Ministries to support glucagon administration. The Integrated Primary, Acute and Community Care Committee has been asked to provide the Ministry of Health with health authority contact information by October 15, 2013, to be used by school districts to arrange glucagon training for school staff.
- For the 2014/15 school year, applicable policy changes, provincial guidelines, training materials and supports will be in place to enable Nursing Support Services to train and monitor school staff to administer insulin for students not yet independent in the task.
- For the current 2013/14 school year, until the above steps are in place, requests for delegation of insulin administration should continue to be addressed locally and on a case by case basis until the above provincial supports are established.

We want to acknowledge the excellent work that health authority staff have already been doing to support the needs of students with diabetes. We would also like to thank Child Health BC for the report and its work with families, school districts, and diabetic experts to identify evidence-based practices that safely address the needs of children with T1D in the school setting.

Government is committed to work with families – through the Ministries of Children and Family Development, Health, and Education, and health authorities and school districts – to develop solutions that safely address the needs of these children.

Ministry of Health staff are committed to engaging with health and education sectors in the development of processes and materials where appropriate, and to providing supports and communication to the field regarding this matter.

We are pleased to make these significant changes to respond to the health needs of children with T1D and their families. Thank you for making this a priority and for your continued support as we move forward. As a next step, in the upcoming weeks we will be contacting those who have direct responsibility for care of diabetic children in your health authority for further discussion and action.

Meanwhile, if you have specific questions please contact Joan Geber at joan.geber@gov.bc.ca (250-952-3678) or Carla Springinotic at Carla.springinotic@gov.bc.ca (250-952-1794).

Sincerely,



for Doug Hughes
Assistant Deputy Minister
Health Services and Quality Assurance



Arlene Paton
Assistant Deputy Minister
Population and Public Health

pc: Joan Geber, Executive Director

