

Protocol for Asthma Management

I. Background:

Many school-age asthmatics miss school or experience symptoms of asthma, often without the awareness of the child's physician. This may be due to parents accepting a certain degree of symptoms as "normal", and those who neglect to report asthma symptoms. Many children need a more effective medication regimen or instruction on proper use of medication delivery systems. Students with poor asthma management are likely to over- use emergency services, experience preventable hospital admissions, and have excessive school absences.

II. Purpose:

Improve students' asthma management through information exchange and coordination between school nurses and physicians.

III. Procedures:

A. Physicians

1. For each of their school-age asthmatic patients, physicians are asked to complete the *Student Asthma Action Plan* and forward to the school nurse. The completed form can be sent to the student's school directly or via the parent.
2. Physicians may contact school nurses for information regarding the student's condition, symptoms and effective use of prescribed management. School nurses may also be asked to provide nursing education to enhance effective use of medication delivery systems.

B. School Nurses:

1. School nurses will monitor absences of asthmatic students. They will work with attendance clerks to develop a mechanism for notification regarding students who miss five days within any 30-day period.
2. School nurses will contact physicians, health plans and/or parents regarding excessive absences that may be attributed to the child's asthma condition. The school nurse, physician, and/or health plan will encourage the parent to bring the child to the physician for re-evaluation in the event of frequent or prolonged absences due to asthma. (See *School Absences Due to Chronic Illness* form.)
3. Assessment of asthma symptoms at school, medication administration, observation of technique in using a spacer or peak flow meter, and/or education regarding effective use of medication delivery systems will be provided by school nurse as needed, and in coordination with the student's physician.

IV. Attachments

Student Asthma Action Plan
School Absence Due To Chronic Illness