

Medication Policy

Many people who come to Interchange take medication. It is very important that Interchange has a policy to clearly explain how to administer, handle, record and store medication safely, and who is responsible for different roles to do with medication.

Staff Responsibilities:

When giving someone medication, staff need to make sure it is done properly, as giving medication incorrectly can be dangerous.

Staff at IOE are trained in how to give medications and first aid. Staff and families work together to get all the information they need about a medication – how, when and why to give medication. Families need to sign that a medication sheet is correct before staff can give the medication.

Staff also need to make sure that they store medication properly and safely, and sign medication sheets when they give medication.

It is the responsibility of staff to:

- Make sure their training is up to date
- Make sure that all medication they handle is labelled, has the correct date/s, and is in a Webster pack (if it is tablets or capsules) or in original packaging (if is a liquid, powder or cream)
- Make sure that the medication sheet has been signed by the family so that they know the medication is correct.
- Ask for help (from the coordinator, team leader or after hours phone) if they are unsure.

Staff members have the right to say that a participant can not come on a group program if there is a problem with medication; for example that it is not labelled, or not in a Webster pack (or original container for liquid, powder or cream), or if there are any other problems with the medication that means the staff member cannot be sure they are giving the medication correctly and safely

Family responsibilities:

Families have the right to feel that staff at IOE can administer medication correctly and safely to their family member.

The role of the family members is to provide staff with as much information as possible about their family member's medication, to help staff make sure they can administer the medication correctly.

It is the responsibility of families to:

- Make sure that staff are kept up to date with medication information, including what to give, how much, how to give the medication, and any changes to the medication
- Provide staff with information about what to do for their family member in an emergency
- Provide medication correctly; for example labelled correctly and in a Webster pack if it is tablets or capsules, or in the original packaging if it is liquid, powder or cream

Types of Medication:

Medication can come in lots of different forms (for example, tablets, capsules, drops, liquids, ointments, lotions, powders or sprays).

People can take their medication in many ways. Some examples include: swallowing it, through a PEG tube, breathing it in, rubbed into skin, or with an injection.

- If medication is prescribed to change a person's behaviour, this is a 'chemical restraint' and staff need to follow 'restrictive intervention' rules. (See restrictive intervention guidelines).
- "prescribed medication " is medication that a doctor has given to treat a medical condition
- "Non-prescribed medication" is medication that can be bought without a script from a doctor. It may help the person feel better or keep them healthy.
- PRN medication (can be called "as required" medication) can be medication that is prescribed (like a medication to stop seizures) or non-prescribed (like cough medicine)
- Vitamins and herbal supplements are considered medication
- If someone needs medication in case of an emergency, (for example to stop a seizure, or when someone has a bad allergic reaction), they must have an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) and staff need to be trained in what to do for that person in an emergency.

All medications need to be correctly listed on the medication sheet - correct dose, time and how it is given, including any allergies the person has.

People take medications in lots of different ways. IOE staff need to have extra training to give medication through PEG tubes, into the rectum or with an injection.

Receiving medication:

For a group activity at Interchange, all medication must be handed to staff in a Webster Pack made by a pharmacy, or original packaging if it is liquid, drops, cream etc.

The only exception is if the person has been given a place on the activity within 24 hours of the activity. If this is the case, the family may provide medication in its original packaging.

If the cost of a Webster pack is too difficult for a family to afford, they can speak with a team leader who may be able to assist the family to ensure they can access Webster packs.

It is preferred that Webster packs are available for staff to use when working on 1:1 shifts and in home support. If the family do not use Webster packs at home, the support worker can give medication from its original packaging, which should match the medication sheet. If the medication has changed, the family should make sure the medication sheet matches the correct medication before they leave.

Groups going on interstate or overseas holidays with IOE staff or volunteers must have all medication in a Webster pack (or original packaging for liquids, lotions etc.) and given to IOE at least one week before the trip. It is preferred that an extra three days worth of medication is provided in case there are any travel delays. For example, flights being cancelled and needing to stay in another country for an extra couple of days. Staff must have these medications with enough time to check the medication sheet is the same as what is provided, and have any problems fixed before the trip leaves.

When travelling with liquid medication, the family need to consider how much liquid you are allowed to take onto a plane. If the medication needs to be in the plane cabin, a doctor's letter must be with it, stating when and why the dose is required. Families can speak to a travel agent or airline if they need more information about this.

Some medications are illegal or restricted in other countries. If there is a doctor's letter that explains the medication clearly it may be accepted. It is the responsibility of the family to check this and discuss with staff before the trip leaves.

Recording:

All medication given by IOE must be on the person's Medication sheet. The medication sheet includes what medication/s, how much, how to prepare the medication, what time, how to administer it, any PRN or "as required" medication s, and any allergies.

The information on the Medication sheet must be the same as what is on the Webster Pak or original container.

Before the activity/shift, the individual/parent/guardian must sign the Medication sheet to say the information is correct.

The Medication sheet is also used to keep a record of when and who gave the medication and must be signed by the staff for every medication they give.

If the medication sheet does not match the medication, the parent or guardian will be contacted to clarify details.

On 1:1 shifts, medication may be given from the original container. All completed Medication sheets must be sent to the person's co-ordinator. If no Medication sheet is available, staff need to write all details that should be on the Medication sheet sign it and send this to the coordinator.

Medication sheets must be completed in all areas of IOE and are not just for camps and day activities. It is the staff member's responsibility to make sure they have enough medication sheets.

Storage of Medication:

All medication needs to be stored safely.

On group activities, all medication must be stored in a locked bag that can only be opened by staff members. This includes staff and volunteers medications.

Medication that needs to be in the fridge must also be stored in a locked container in the fridge.

On 1:1 shifts, the staff member needs to store the medication as safely as possible – if it can be locked away, that would be best.

PRN Medication:

Pro Re Nata (PRN) medication is medication to be given only when the person needs it. Some people need PRN medication for medical conditions (for example, epilepsy or asthma); some people may need PRN medication for other things (for example, pain killers when they have a headache/pain). All PRN medication (tablets and capsules) must be sent in a Webster Pack.

IOE needs detailed information about when the PRN medication should be given, whether the medication is prescribed by a doctor, or non-prescribed. This information must be followed by all staff.

PRN medication for medical conditions requires management plans; (for example asthma, epilepsy and diabetes).

Medication to change a person's behaviour is called a "chemical restraint" (Restrictive Intervention), and may be PRN. A Behaviour Support Plan must be written and have the detailed instructions on when to give the medication. As this is a Restrictive Intervention, staff need to follow restrictive intervention procedures before, during and after giving this type of PRN medication (see restrictive intervention guidelines).

An incident report must be submitted if PRN Restrictive Intervention medication has been given, whether or not it is in a Behaviour Support Plan.

Individuals who self administer:

If someone can administer their own medication, they need to give their medication to staff in a zip lock bag with their name and date of birth on it at the beginning of the activity. Staff will hand this back whenever the person asks for it. This is to make sure the medication is safely locked away.

Someone 'administers their own medication' if they can correctly take what they need to take when they need it, without any prompting from staff. IOE staff do not need to fill out a medication sheet when someone administers their own medication.

If a person needs reminding to take their medication, the above medication policy still applies.