

Administrator Implementation Tips

Tool

Resource: Creating Asthma Friendly Environments

Administrators and school staff play a central role in creating asthma friendly schools. The following implementation tips include activities appropriate for administrators to support asthma friendly schools.

- **Establish a process to identify students with asthma:** Add a question about asthma and the use of asthma medication/inhalers to all registration forms that should be completed annually.
- **Supporting a student with asthma is a collaborative effort:**

Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 161: Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy) in Schools, 2018 requires that school boards work collaboratively with families to develop a *Plan of Care* to help students with asthma. The *Plan of Care* is a form that helps empower and support students with prevalent medical conditions, such as asthma. This form requires participation from the school boards, school staff, educators, parents/guardians and students.

- **Easy access to asthma medication:**
 - Establish a process that identifies which students can carry and administer their asthma medication.
 - Know which students require assistance with storing and taking their medication. Students who are unable to administer their own medication should have it easily and quickly accessible. Worsening asthma can happen quickly, and easy access to medication is important.
- **Establish a process for handling worsening asthma:**

- Adhere to policy or guideline for a school-wide approach to managing worsening asthma and emergency situations. This policy should be aligned with PPM 161: Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy) in Schools, a Ministry of Education policy on supporting and empowering students with prevalent medical conditions effective September 1, 2018.
- Display the Lung Health Foundation's [What to do in the event of an Asthma Attack](#) poster in key locations.
- Ensure that parents/guardians of students with asthma complete and submit the *Plan of Care*. This form personalizes the approach for supporting the student by containing the student's photograph, emergency contacts, information about the student's asthma triggers and reliever inhaler (including where it's located and dosing) and how to recognize and respond to asthma symptoms and emergency situations.

- **Identify and reduce common asthma triggers within the school environment :**

Monitor for asthma triggers on an ongoing basis and take action to reduce exposure to asthma triggers whenever possible. For example, advocate for the use of scent-free markers and cleaning products, dust free chalk, and HVAC systems that support clean indoor air. Plan for building repairs or cleaning at times that reduce the possibility of exposing students to fumes, dust and other irritants.

- **Encourage students with asthma to participate in physical activity and play :**

Advocate and support students with asthma to participate in all activities, including physical activities and outdoor play.

- **Provide opportunities for asthma education to teachers, school staff, parents/guardians, students and volunteers:**

At least annually, provide education with regards to identifying and managing worsening asthma, proper use of inhalers and identifying and managing asthma triggers. Consider holding general asthma awareness education sessions for the school community.

- **Collaborate with others (For example, health care providers, public health, parents/guardians and community partners) to create asthma friendly schools :**

Identify an individual in the school to act as an asthma resource or Asthma Champion. This person could identify and review new asthma resources and help organize asthma-related activities, such as annual educational events or incorporation of asthma into First Aid trainings.