



Office of Student Health and Wellness
42 West Madison, Garden • Chicago, Illinois 60602

TO: CPS Nurses

CC: Janice Jackson, Chief Education Officer

FROM: Kenneth Fox MD, Chief Health Officer, Office of Student Health and Wellness (OSHW)

DATE: September 8, 2017

RE: 2017/2018 SY **District-Issued Epinephrine (DI EpiPen) and Severe Allergy Update**

The purpose of this Memo is to respond to back-to-school questions from Nurses re: DI EpiPens and to underscore the most critical aspects of school management of severe food allergies.

On DI EpiPens

- District-Issued Epinephrine Injectors (DI EpiPens) must be available in all schools. The purpose of the mandate is to make sure this lifesaving emergency medication is available at every school in case of severe allergic reaction among any afflicted student or staff member – even if the sufferer’s own stock medication has not been made available or was not previously prescribed. DI EpiPens are not intended to replace previously prescribed medications.
- DI EpiPens were distributed to all schools SY 2016-17 by OSHW along with a Memo dated Nov 15, 2016 to guide their use. **All DI EpiPens distributed at that time are appropriate for use through Feb 2018.** In the 2016 Memo, schools were advised to discard any expired EpiPens in the school’s “sharps container” (typically located in the Nursing Office). However, please double check your current DI EpiPen supply to make certain that instructions were followed and that your school’s EpiPens are up to date. OSHW will re-supply all schools’ current stock of DI EpiPens over the coming months prior to their Feb 2018 expiration.¹
- Any EpiPen use must be reported via Verify on IMPACT by the principal (or designee) within 24 hours. This action triggers EpiPen replacement by the Office of Student Health and Wellness. Used or discarded EpiPens will be quickly replaced.

On Severe Allergy (Anaphylaxis) Management in Schools

- Students and staff with known history of food allergies must notify their schools and make their own EpiPens available for use at school. We strongly encourage the **“Self-carry” policy** which means a person’s emergency medicine is **with them at all times** (in a pocket, desk or backpack, etc) or kept on behalf of and **in close proximity to the person in an easily and freely accessible, secure but unlocked place** at school.
- All school staff must be trained to deal with severe allergy emergencies. Training can be completed in less than one hour and is available on the Learning Hub outlined course # 72657 **SY 18 Chronic Conditions Training for All School Staff.**
- Call 911 **IMMEDIATELY AFTER EpiPen is given.** Give the emergency medicine FIRST, then call Emergency Medical Services (EMS). EMS must assess any EpiPen recipient and the patient must be taken to an emergency room for further evaluation. Remember, the EpiPen has rapid onset but short duration of action. The medicine will wear off before the threat of further symptoms disappears, so **EMS and hospital follow up after EpiPen administration is critical.**

Additional information about the Food Allergy Management Policy is on the Office of Student Health and Wellness Knowledge Center page (cps.edu/oshw/Pages/HealthPolicies.aspx). You may contact the Office of Student Health and Wellness at OSHW@cps.edu with questions.

¹ EpiPens retain substantial amounts of epinephrine (which would provide beneficial pharmacological effects) many months to years beyond their labelled expiration dates. **In the setting of outpatient anaphylaxis without better alternatives,** the benefits of using an expired EpiPen far outweigh the risks. (Annals of Internal Medicine, June 20, 2017; 166 (12): 918-919).