

## Ministerial Order 90

Dear Principal,

The *Children's Services and Education Legislation (Anaphylaxis Management) Amendment Act 2008* received Royal Assent in March 2008 and comes into effect on 14 July 2008.

All schools across Victoria, from 14 July 2008, must by law have an anaphylaxis management policy if they have a student enrolled who has been diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis. This policy must include procedures for:

1. individual management plans for each child at risk;
2. a communication plan to inform staff, parents and students about anaphylaxis and the school's anaphylaxis management policy; and
3. staff training and emergency response.

Please find enclosed Ministerial Order 90 Anaphylaxis Management in Schools, which sets out clearly what steps schools must, at a minimum, take to ensure the safety of students at risk of anaphylaxis in their care. These requirements, from 14 July 2008, will form the basis of a minimum standard for school registration under Part IV of the Education and Training Reform Act.

Victorian schools are well prepared to appropriately manage students who have been diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis. Many schools have put excellent strategies and procedures in place in line with the Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Victorian Government Schools which were released in 2007. The requirements in the Ministerial Order are consistent with and build on the Anaphylaxis Guidelines.

This information pack will assist schools to understand the requirements of the new legislation. It includes a Questions and Answers sheet and a sample anaphylaxis management policy. It also includes an insert for schools to use to provide information to school communities, a risk assessment tool and a DVD that has been jointly developed by the Department, Ambulance Victoria First Aid and the Royal Children's Hospital.

The Anaphylaxis Management DVD can be used at staff meetings to raise awareness of anaphylaxis, remind staff of how to use an EpiPen® (autoadrenaline injecting device) and key management strategies to minimize risks in the school environment.

The key to prevention of anaphylaxis in schools is knowledge, awareness and planning. I encourage you to revisit the information and resources in the Anaphylaxis Guidelines which contain a range of strategies and advice on anaphylaxis management in schools. It is also important to continue to work in partnership with parents/carers in order to minimize the risks associated with severe allergies.

Victorian schools are leading the way nationally in providing support to students with severe, life threatening allergies. This legislation will build on this good work.

All of the resources in this kit, as well as details of how to organise training for staff or get advice can be found on the Department's website, at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/anaphylaxis.htm>

Yours sincerely



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