The Individual Health Plan

Essential to achieve educational equality for students with health management needs

Ensures access to an education for students with special health care needs, whether or not the student is classified as eligible for special education

What is an Individual Health Plan?

A formal written agreement developed with the interdisciplinary collaboration of the school staff in partnership with the student’s family, the student, and the student’s health care provider(s)

Why an IHP?

Ensures that the school has needed information and authorization

Addresses family & school concerns

Clarifies roles & responsibilities

Establishes a basis for ongoing teamwork, communication, & evaluation

"Hallmarks" of a Good IHP

Contains information, guidelines & standards that promote a student’s health & educational goals
Avoids unnecessary risk, restriction, stigma, illness, & absence

**Basis for an IHP**

**Benefits of IHP to Schools**

Protect individual and district liability of school boards & administrators

Documents compliance with federal and state laws and regulations

Data from IHPs about individual and aggregate needs facilitates planning for staffing, budgeting, professional development, policies, & cost-effective use of school and community resources

**IHP needs to address:**

Collaboration!!

**IHP needs to provide for:**

Opportunities for collaborative planning & problem-solving among staff & parents

Coordination of physical, social, emotional & academic goals

Academic & social continuity

Achievement of personal fitness goals and safe participation in physical education, sports, field trips and other special events
Staff training & peer sensitization

Environmental controls (maintaining air quality, elimination of irritants, allergens, & toxic hazards)

Medically timely & convenient access to medication at all times

Individualized crisis & emergency management

**Need for an IHP**

Every student with a health impairment or physical disability needs documentation of their needs and the services to be provided through an IHP

The IHP clarifies the provision of medication, monitoring of health status, & other aspects of health management

**Who might need an IHP?**

Students with:

- **Asthma**
- **Serious allergies**
- **Chronic conditions**
- **Physical disabilities**
- **ADD/ADHD**
- **Medication needs**
- **Need for catheterization**
Need for toileting assistance

What are the consequences of not having an IHP?

Students can’t reliably access medication as needed

Staff do not understand the precautions necessary to avoid hazardous or life-threatening situations

Staff can’t assist students to overcome obstacles to participation & achievement

Other negative consequences

Student absences may increase

Student absences & poor performance may be blamed on the child or family

Student health deteriorates

Student lives may be threatened

Other students may also suffer

Developing the IHP

Speak with your child’s health care provider(s) about your child’s school experiences and the potential threats to their health in the school environment
Seek information from your child’s health care provider(s) about your child’s specialized needs in the school environment

Request that your child’s health care provider(s) document your child’s needs and necessary supports, services, etc. in writing to share with the school

Request a meeting with your child’s school to discuss development of an Individualized Health Plan

Special Education:

If your child is receiving special education services, incorporate the information relating to the IHP into the IEP meeting

Request that the IHP services be included as part of the IEP

Ensure that the IHP section of the IEP be shared with all relevant staff & administrators

If your child is not currently receiving special education services, consider whether your child may be eligible for special education services (for example, Other Health Impaired; Physical Disability)

If appropriate, request an evaluation for special education services. Ensure that your child’s health issues are evaluated.

Section 504:

If your child’s special health care needs significantly impact your child’s daily activities (learning, breathing, seeing, walking, etc.) in the school environment, request a Section 504 evaluation

Meet with the 504 team to share information on your child’s special health care needs & develop a Section 504 plan that incorporates an IHP
Developing the IHP, continued

Other:

If your child’s special health care needs do not require special education or a Section 504 plan, ask to meet with the appropriate school or district staff to discuss an IHP

Share the information from your child’s health care provider(s)

Identify key times of day, activities, places, etc. that require special attention

Developing the IHP, continued

Develop the IHP containing:

Description of your child’s special health care needs & how they are impacted by the school environment

Description of the specific services, supports, etc. that will be provided to your child to address their special health care needs

Developing the IHP, continued

Identification of parties responsible to provide services, supports, etc.

Description of training/professional development needed and how and when it will be provided

Specify ongoing services as well as protocols for emergencies

How and how often will the family be informed of status of implementation?

Developing the IHP, continued
Describe the responsibilities of all parties, including principal, school nurse, teacher, aide, family, and student, including back-up plans when the trained teacher is absent, etc.

Set starting date for implementation

Set dates for periodic review of the plan to ensure it is effective

**Once the IHP is developed:**

Sign and date the IHP document

Copy the IHP document

Disseminate the document to all relevant school and district staff, family members, student if appropriate

Meet as needed with staff who have responsibilities under the IHP to explain their responsibilities & set training

**Provide follow-up**

Ensure that training is provided

Ensure the IHP is being implemented

Contact appropriate staff periodically to ensure plan is working

Check with your child frequently

Keep your child’s health care provider(s) informed

Inform your school of any changes

Update the IHP at least annually