


Policy

Early Years – Epilepsy and Seizures

Date of Adoption	10 April 2013		
Adoption Method	<input type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director Community
Director Signature	Signed by:  <small>A4566C08D5B4450...</small>		Date 29-11-2024
Responsible Officer and Unit	Samantha Waymouth, Coordinator Early Years Services		
Nominated Review Period	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Every 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>please specify</i>)
Last Endorsement Date	October 2020		
Next Endorsement Date	November 2024		

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

Policy

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Purpose/Objective

This policy outlines the procedures to:

- ensure educators, staff and parents/guardians are aware of their obligations and required strategies in supporting children with epilepsy to safely and fully participate in the program and activities of Council's Early Years Services
- ensure all necessary information for the effective management of children with epilepsy enrolled within Council's Early Years Services is collected and recorded so that these children receive appropriate attention when required.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Policy – Managing Medical Conditions.

Scope

This policy applies to the approved provider, staff, contractors, students on placement at kindergartens, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Council's Early Years Services, including during offsite excursions and activities.

Background/Reasons for Policy

Epilepsy is a common, serious neurological condition characterised by recurrent seizures due to abnormal electrical activity in the brain. While about 1 in 200 children live with epilepsy, the impact is variable – some children are greatly affected while others are not.

Most people living with epilepsy have good control of their seizures through medication, however it is important that all those working with children living with epilepsy have a good understanding of the effects of seizures, required medication and appropriate first aid for seizures.

Legislation which governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of children, and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm. *Regulation 136 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* requires the approved provider to ensure that there is at least one educator on duty at all times who has a current approved first aid qualification.

Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this policy.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Approved first aid qualifications	First aid qualifications that meet the requirements of <i>Regulation 136(1)</i> and have been approved by the national authority.
Duty of care	A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.
Emergency epilepsy medication	Medication that has been prescribed for the treatment of prolonged seizures or a cluster of seizures. The most common type of emergency medication prescribed is buccal or nasal midazolam
Emergency medication management plan (EMMP)	Completed by the prescribing doctor in consultation with the individual and/or their family/carer. This medication plan must be attached to the individual's Epilepsy Management Plan, which has been signed by the child's treating doctor. The preferred template to be used by the prescribing doctor can be found at: www.epilepsyfoundation.org.au
Epilepsy	A neurological disorder marked by sudden recurrent (two or more) episodes of sensory disturbance, loss of consciousness, or convulsions associated with abnormal electrical activity in the brain.
Epilepsy management plan (EMP)	Designed to help people recognise when seizures are occurring, and gives clear directions about appropriate first aid. The plan is developed by the person who has the most knowledge and experience of the individual's epilepsy and seizures, and should be less than 12 months old. The management of epilepsy requires a team approach, and the plan should be reviewed and signed by the individual's treating doctor.

	An EMP and support package has been designed by The Epilepsy Foundation: www.epilepsyfoundation.org.au
Medication record	Contains details for each child to whom medication is to be administered by the service. This includes the child's name, signed authorisation to administer medication and a record of the medication administered, including time, date, dosage, manner of administration, name and signature of person administering the medication and of the person checking the medication, if required (<i>Regulation 92</i>). A sample medication record is available on the ACECQA website.
Midazolam	Also known as Hypnovel, midazolam belongs to a group of pharmaceuticals called benzodiazepines. In epilepsy, midazolam is used for emergency management of seizures, as it has the ability to stop the seizures quickly. Midazolam is fast-acting and can be easily administered by family and carers in a variety of settings. It is most commonly administered buccally or nasally.
Midazolam kit	An insulated container with an unused, in-date midazolam ampoule/s, a copy of the child's EMMP and EMP (which includes a picture of the child), and telephone contact details for the child's parents/guardians, doctor/medical personnel and the person to be notified in the event of a seizure requiring administration of midazolam, if parents/guardians cannot be contacted. Midazolam must be stored away from light (cover with aluminium foil) and in temperatures of less than 25°C.
Seizure record	An accurate record of seizure activity, which is important for identifying any seizure patterns and changes in response to treatment.
Seizure triggers	Seizures may occur for no apparent reason, but common triggers include: forgetting to take medication, lack of sleep, other illness, heat, stress/boredom, missing meals and dehydration. Flashing or flickering lights can also trigger seizures in about 5 per cent of people living with epilepsy.

Staff record	Must be kept by the service and include details of the nominated supervisor, the educational leader, other staff members, volunteers and the responsible person. The record must include information about qualifications, training and details of the staff member's <i>Working with Children Check (Regulations 146–149)</i> . A sample staff record is available on the ACECQA website.
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References

- > The National Epilepsy Support Service: <https://epilepsysmart.org.au/ness/> or phone 1300 761 487 9am to 5pm (AEST) Monday to Friday
- > The Epilepsy Foundation: <http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org.au/>
- > Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
- > *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-01/NQF-Resource-02-Guide-to-ECS-Law-Regs.pdf>
- > Epilepsy Smart Schools: <http://www.epilepsysmartschools.org.au/>

Related Policies

- > Early Years Policy - Administration of First Aid
- > Early Years Policy - Administration of Medication
- > Early Years Policy – Dealing with Medical Conditions
- > Early Years Policy - Excursions and Service Events
- > Early Years Policy - Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- > Early Years Policy - Inclusion and Equity
- > Early Years Policy - Staffing Requirements

- > Privacy Policy (Council)

Related Legislation

- > *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Sections 5, 44, 56, 106–109, 114, 115, 118, 161, 162, 172, 291(5)
- > *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 35, 46–49, 146, 168(2)(i)(ii), 173, 176(2)(c)
- > *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)*
- > *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements*
 - Standard 4.1: Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing
- > *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management*
 - Standard 7.1: Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community
 - Element 7.1.5: Adults working with children and those engaged in management of the service or residing on the premises are fit and proper.
- > *Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)*
- > *Working with Children Regulations 2006 (Vic)*

Policy

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Families	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Providing all staff with a copy of the Early Years Policy - Epilepsy and Seizures and ensuring that they are aware of all enrolled children living with epilepsy or non-epileptic seizures	R	✓	✓		✓
Providing families of children with epilepsy or non-epileptic seizures with a copy of the Early Years Policy - Epilepsy and Seizures (<i>Regulation 91</i>) and the Early Years Policy - Administration of Medication, upon enrolment/diagnosis of their child	R	✓		✓	
Facilitating communication between management, educators, staff and families regarding the Early Years Policy - Epilepsy and Seizures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring that all educators' first aid qualifications, including CPR training, are current, meet the requirements of the National Law: Section 169(4) and National Regulations 137, and are approved by ACECQA	R	✓	✓		✓
Informing staff, either on enrolment or on initial diagnosis, that their child has epilepsy or non-epileptic seizures				✓	
Providing a copy of their child's EMP (including an EMMP where relevant) to the service at the time of enrolment. This plan should be reviewed and updated at least annually				✓	

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Families	Contractors, volunteers and students
Ensuring that all children with epilepsy have an EMP, seizure record and, where relevant, an EMMP, filed with their enrolment record. Records must be no more than 12 months old	✓	✓		✓	
Providing staff with a new updated EMP and medication record when changes to the order have been made (signed by the child's doctor/neurologist)				✓	
Communicating regularly with educators/staff in relation to the ongoing general health and wellbeing of their child, and the management of their child's epilepsy or non-epileptic seizures				✓	
Developing a risk minimisation plan for every child with epilepsy or non-epileptic seizures, in consultation with families/ their state epilepsy organisation/medical practitioner	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Identifying and, where possible, minimising possible seizure triggers (refer to Definitions) as outlined in the child's EMP	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Taking all personal EMP , seizure records, medication records, emergency medication plans and any prescribed medication on excursions and to other offsite events	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that all staff have current CPR training and are aware of seizure first aid procedures (refer to Attachment 1) when a child with epilepsy or non-	R	✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Families	Contractors, volunteers and students
epileptic seizures is enrolled at the service					
Ensuring that all staff attend training conducted by their state/territory -based epilepsy organisation on the management of epilepsy and, where appropriate, emergency management of seizures using emergency (epileptic) seizure medication, when a child with epilepsy is enrolled at the service	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that only staff who have received child-specific training in the administration of emergency medications are permitted to administer that medication	✓	✓			
Ensuring that medication is administered in accordance with the Early Years Policy - Administration of Medication Policy and information provided in the EMMP (method of administration, dose, time frame, frequency, maximum doses in a 24-hour period)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring a medication record is kept for each child to who medication is to be administered by the service (<i>Regulation 92</i>)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that emergency medication is stored correctly, as outlined in the training provided by the state/ territory-based epilepsy organisation, and that it remains within its expiration date	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Where emergency medication has been prescribed, providing an adequate				✓	

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Families	Contractors, volunteers and students
supply of emergency medication for their child at all times					
Being aware of, and sensitive to, possible side effects and behavioural changes following a seizure or changes to the child's medication regime or following administration of emergency medication following an emergency event.	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Compiling a list of children with epilepsy and non-epileptic seizures and placing it in a secure, but readily accessible, location known to all staff. This should include the EMP, seizure record and EMMP for each child with epilepsy	R	✓			
Ensuring that induction procedures for casual and relief staff include information about children attending the service who have been diagnosed with epilepsy and non-epileptic seizures, and the location of their medication and management plans	R	✓			
Ensuring programmed activities and experiences take into consideration the individual needs of all children, including any children with epilepsy and non-epileptic seizures	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that children with epilepsy and non-epileptic seizures are not discriminated against in any way	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that children living with epilepsy and non-epileptic seizures can	R	✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Families	Contractors, volunteers and students
participate in all activities safely and to their full potential					
Encouraging their child to learn about their epilepsy and non-epileptic seizures, and to communicate with service staff if they are unwell or experiencing symptoms of a potential seizure				✓	
Immediately communicating any concerns with families regarding the management of children with epilepsy at the service	R	✓	✓		✓
Communicating any concerns to families if a child's epilepsy is limiting his/her ability to participate fully in all activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Following appropriate reporting procedures set out in the Early Years Policy - Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness in the event that a child is ill, or is involved in a medical emergency or an incident at the service that results in injury or trauma	R	R	R		R
Organising general epilepsy management information sessions for families of children enrolled at the service, where appropriate. Information identifying which students within the service have a diagnosis of epilepsy, or student specific information, should only be shared with other parents/ guardians if consent has been gained from the parent/ guardian of the child with epilepsy.	✓	✓			

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify all stakeholders including parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172 (2)).

Attachments

- Attachment 1: Seizure First Aid (D23-77530)
- Attachment 2: Enrolment checklist for children prescribed midazolam (D23-77532)
- Attachment 3: Sample Risk Minimisation Plan for children prescribed midazolam (D23-77533)