

# Developing an Individualized Health Care Plan

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Planning and preparation by school personnel are key elements for guaranteeing the safety of students and the delivery of quality health services and quality education. The Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) is a document used to guide the student's health care in the school setting. Developing an IHCP requires the nurse, using the nursing process, to understand the student's health issue and complete a nursing assessment.

**Health Assessment:** A comprehensive assessment to include health information provided by the student, family and medical provider. The nurse may also complete a systems-based physical assessment of the student to develop the student's baseline. The school nurse should obtain consent to obtain and review other pertinent health information.

- *Description of current medical condition:* Include the diagnosis or details of the special health care need and its impact on the child's performance in school.
- *Brief health history:* This information should only be relevant to the current or ongoing care of the student.
- *Baseline health status:* Include parameters like vital signs, blood pressure, skin color, level of activity, neurological status, and pain so it is clear when parameters are out of range for student.
- *Comprehensive medications review:* To include prescription medications taken both at home and at school, dose, route, time, and side effects. Also note PRN medications, including brand. Consider school districts plan for discretionary medications.

**Transdisciplinary members of the IHCP team:** Identify who should be on this team and identify their role and responsibilities. Possible team members include the student, family, teachers, school nurse, private duty nurse, educational and development specialists, early intervention team, dietary staff, transportation staff, community emergency services.

**Support Personnel:** Identify the child's physician and other health care providers who are not a member of the transdisciplinary team. The school nurse should obtain consent to obtain and review other pertinent health information. Include a list of names, specialties, and contact information.

**Interventions:** The necessary or required nursing actions. The IHCP should detail what, when, where, and how procedures should be performed in school and by school personnel. Include the rationale, step-by-step instructions, and student's ability to assist or perform.

**Feeding and Nutritional Needs:** Identify any special nutrition, restriction, or feeding plan the student requires. This includes route of feed, type of formula, texture of food, fluid requirement, food allergies, time, position, and supervision.

**Equipment Needs:** Any assistive technology or medical equipment that is necessary should be listed, along with a description of how the devices work and should be maintained. This could include feeding pumps, ventilators, suction catheters, urinary catheters, mobility devices, and orthotics. Also note the manufacturer, type, size, and storage considerations. Consider a daily check-in procedure to verify required supplies are available daily. Remember to document necessary training.

**Transportation Needs:** Transportation to and from the school building is included in the student's school day. Consider type of special transportation, temperature modifications, assistive personnel, length of ride, seating, and equipment storage needs. Establish a system of

communication with driver and/or party responsible for the student, as well as provide and document necessary training and/or emergency care plan.

**Identify Staff Training Needs:** Ideally training, carried out by a qualified professional, should occur prior to the student's arrival to school. Re-training may be required dependent upon changes in the student's health status. Training should be individualized to the knowledge base and experience of the staff responsible for the student.

- *General training information:* Explanation of health condition, signs and symptoms of problems, explanation and/or demonstration of medical equipment, emergency plan
- *Specific training:* Explanation of diagnosis, health history, and plan for health interventions throughout the school day. Demonstration and return demonstration of procedures or equipment may be required. Note school district policy for delegation.
- *Documentation:* Name of trainer, date, topic, and attendees

**Documentation:** Documentation should be kept daily when student receives care or a procedure is performed. Communicate with school staff or private duty nurse, when applicable, and establish plan for reportable conditions. Remember, if it's not documented, it was not done.

**Student self-care:** Assess level of independence in management of disease and/or treatment plan. Consider willingness or ability to perform or dictate care, cognitive level, maturity, dexterity, and physical ability. Note policy for supervision and verifying competency of student.

**Psycho-social consideration:** Assess student's perception of self, interaction with family and peers, behavior, possible stressors, and supports. Determine if student is involved with

extracurricular activities, social events, groups or organizations. Also consider medical expenses, transportation to care, residency, and FARM.

**Education Planning- IEP/504 plan:** Note establishment of IHCP, but do not attach in the educational record. Communicate with school chair for a plan to notify and invite nursing staff or supervisor to any team meeting for a child with a health diagnosis. Recognize and support transition planning to maximize student well-being and academic success.

**Special considerations and planning:** This could include special request regarding the care of the student or plan for communication with the family. Consider development age of student, family's understanding of disease, support, cultural consideration, and home environment. Establish notification plan for school staff concerning field trips and events away/outside of the school building. Develop a plan for nursing services on field trips and school-sponsored events.

**Monitoring/Evaluation:** Assessment of the student, communication with all members, and education of staff should be regular and ongoing. Note student's response to this management plan. Orders should be reviewed at least annually and as necessary.