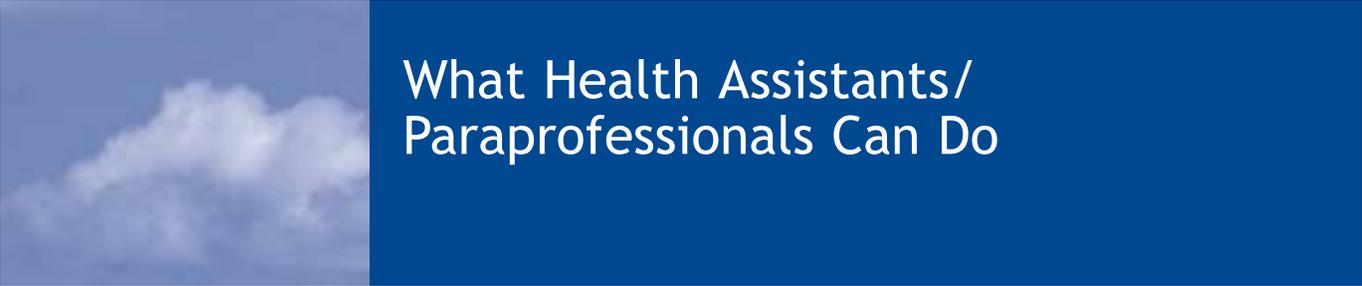


Health Assistant/ Paraprofessional

As a member of the School Health Staff, you're in a position to play an important role in creating an asthma-friendly school.

This section includes information about providing health services to students. It's meant to be used as a companion piece to the section entitled "All Health Staff." Be sure to read that section carefully as it contains a significant amount of information. Taken together, these two sections complement each other and provide a good look at how you can help students who have asthma.

"Healthy children learn better."



What Health Assistants/ Paraprofessionals Can Do

Role in a setting
with a Licensed
School Nurse (LSN)/
Public Health
Nurse (PHN)/
Registered
Nurse (RN)

Some of the activities that some Health Assistants may be directed and/or delegated to do are:

1. Help identify students with asthma by reviewing health forms
2. Distribute and collecting communication from parents, Health Care Providers and other school staff, which may include asthma questionnaires which help obtain asthma information from students and/or parents/guardians
3. Staff the Health Office / Health Room
 - Document asthma visits on your daily log or other means of recording student visits to the health office. Document that the parent/guardian was notified of the asthma health office visit on the daily log or other document as applicable at your school (if directed by LSN / PHN / RN to do so).
 - Ask about symptoms and checking peak flow, especially on students having asthma symptoms
 - Begin record keeping by completing or initiating documentation on a record that includes medication administration, peak flow readings, symptoms, and reinforcing asthma education
 - Administer medication according to medication orders / Asthma Action Plan and your district policy
 - Notify parent/guardian if a student is seen in the Health Office with asthma symptoms and/or distress
 - Notify the LSN / PHN / RN of students who have asthma symptoms more than twice a week

Health Assistants work under the direction, and for some activities delegation, training and supervision of an LSN/PHN/RN.

Role in a setting without a Licensed School Nurse (LSN)/Public Health Nurse (PHN)/ Registered Nurse (RN)

If you are alone in a school or district and not supervised by a LSN / PHN / RN, your role will be different. It is not appropriate for Health Assistants to develop policy or develop Individual Health Plans for students. Be sure to keep in mind your own district's policies and the limits of the care you can provide. The role of the Health Assistant not working under the supervision of the LSN / PHN / RN is primarily: first aid, minor illness care, medication administration per school / district policy and to communicate with parents/guardians observations related to the student with asthma.

Some main points relating to your role are listed below:



- Verify that your school/district has a policy that addresses meeting the health needs of students and any related policies (e.g., medication administration policy, establishing a consultative relationship with a medical consultant or advisor, collaborating with the Emergency Medical System, development of 504 plans, etc.) and that you are familiar with the details of any policy.



- Be aware that MN statute 121A.22 (Administration of drugs and medicine) states that parents can request that school staff administer medications. The school must have a medication policy developed in conjunction with a medical advisor or nurse consultant.



- Be aware that MN Statute 121A.221 (Possession and use of asthma inhalers by students with asthma) states that in schools without a school nurse or school nursing services, parent/guardians must submit written verification from the prescribing professional that documents an assessment of the students knowledge and skills to safely possess and use an asthma inhaler in a school setting

- If you do not receive written verification of the above, go back to the parent/guardian to request this information, and also share this with your immediate supervisor.

- Follow written instructions given to you by the parent and health care provider (on an asthma action plan, other set of orders, etc.). If you have questions or concerns or are unable to follow the orders, go back to the parent for further clarification, and also share it with your immediate supervisor.



- For the student with a 504 plan, follow the instructions on that plan. If you have questions or concerns, go to the 504 coordinator and your immediate supervisor.

