

Health-Related Plans For Asthma Management

School nurses and other staff may keep a range of written plans for each student known to have asthma, as well as emergency plans for students in respiratory distress (either students with no known asthma diagnosis, or students whose Asthma Action Plans do not include emergency plans). For students with asthma, health-related plans may include standing medical orders, education plans, and basic information about a student's asthma.

While the Asthma Action Plan may be the basic document, schools may keep other student-specific documents, some of which are required by federal law. As the following table illustrates, the names and purposes of the plans vary; some provide medical and/or education directives, while others may also serve as a communications tool among the school, parent, and healthcare provider.

Health and Educational Plans for Students with Asthma Comparison Chart¹

Asthma Action Plan	Individualized Emergency Plan	Individualized Nursing Care Plans (Health Care Plans)	Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	504 Plans
<p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide specific instructions about self-care and management of asthma <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students with asthma, especially those with persistent asthma. 	<p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide specific instructions to school staff about management of asthma episodes or attacks in individuals Shared with school staff as appropriate <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students with asthma, especially those most at risk for acute episodes or attacks (e.g., those in poor control, those with significant morbidity, those with persistent asthma). 	<p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Nursing/Health Care Plan that identifies interventions for care of student with health conditions or impairments and includes education about the child's health condition and the knowledge and skills needed for self-care. Should include an Individual Emergency Plan, shared as appropriate with school staff. Kept by school nurse in student's health file; occasionally shared with teachers assisting with meeting goals of student's plan. <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students with asthma, especially those most at risk for acute episodes or attacks (e.g., those in poor control, those with significant morbidity, those with persistent asthma). 	<p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used by school team to identify appropriate interventions to support students' educational performance. Federally mandated for students eligible to receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students qualifying for special education services because of a chronic illness do so through the categories of "other health impaired." For special education students aged 3-21 years. 	<p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used by school team to ensure federally mandated modifications or services are provided to students with physical or mental conditions that substantially limit their ability to participate in public education programs and activities. Developed in response to significant impairment to major life functions that can occur while a student is at school (e.g., breathing difficulties associated with asthma). Incorporates asthma care-related modifications and services in Nursing Care Plan (Health Care Plan). <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For general education students experiencing significant impairment to major life functions that can occur while the student is at school (e.g., breathing difficulties associated with asthma).
<p>Responsible Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed by health care providers in collaboration with the student and parent(s) and provided to school nurse or designee with parental permission. Can be developed by school nurses based on parent input and signed prescribed medication administration forms and sent to the health care provider for review and signature. If appropriately completed and signed, can serve as medical orders for medications, treatment and care, depending on local policy and state law. <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used in developing Emergency Action Plans 	<p>Responsible Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed by school nurse using information from student's health care provider and parents to address actions for managing acute asthma episodes. School nurse distributes plan or information to appropriate school personnel. 	<p>Responsible Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed by school nurse using information from student's health care provider, child, and parents, to address actions for managing acute asthma episodes. Uses nursing process: assessment, planning, intervention, outcomes, evaluation. 	<p>Responsible Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multidisciplinary team in collaboration with parents. Health component of the IEP is developed by the school nurse. 	<p>Responsible Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 504 coordinator or liaison and team as designated by school or district.
<p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on student's Asthma Action Plan or on the Emergency Action component of the Nursing/Health Care Plan (developed from either the Asthma Action Plan or, if not available, form the School-Wide Respiratory Distress Protocol). 	<p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nursing Care Plans (Health Care Plans) may be attached as the health component of the IEP (location in which the HCP is kept noted on the IEP). 			

School-Wide Emergency Plans and Protocols

Purpose: To address specific actions to be taken for any student of staff in respiratory distress, including those with asthma; for school-wide distribution.

Target: All students and staff.

Responsible party: School nurse and school physician consultant.

¹ National Association of School Nurses, School Nurse Asthma Management Program, pg. 02-22