

How to develop plans

For students with allergies, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to complete an ASCIA Action Plan, in consultation with their child's medical practitioner, and provide a copy to the school. The ASCIA Action Plan must be signed by the student's medical practitioner, and have an up to date photograph of the student.

In developing plans, stakeholders should be carefully consulted and may include parents / guardians, carers, general practitioners, teachers, principals, school first aid / nursing staff and the child themselves if age appropriate.

When liaising with stakeholders, don't forget the importance of good communication, such as the seven 'C's.

1. **Clear** (be clear about your message, ensure that stakeholders are aware of the implications of inappropriate or incomplete plans and that your own communication is to the point)
2. **Concise** (try not to ramble or go on tangents – stick to the key message and reason for communication)
3. **Concrete** (ensure that strategies and plans are clearly established and each stakeholder is aware of their own responsibilities)
4. **Correct** (Make sure you double check vital elements of the plan, be very careful when taking notes and ensure you check your work)
5. **Coherent** (Can others understand your speech / handwriting? If not this can have serious consequences. Make sure your plan is logical and is understood by all)
6. **Complete** (Go through each step again – is there anything missing? Sometimes a second opinion can help to ensure you don't overlook key strategies or stakeholders)
7. **Courteous** (Working together to ensure the health and safety of others is important and requires everyone to remember that we each bring different elements and backgrounds to the table. Remember your purpose in preparing the plan)

The key to prevention of anaphylaxis is the identification of triggers (allergens) and prevention of exposure to these. For staff, patients or students who have been diagnosed with a severe allergy, there is a range of practical prevention strategies that workplaces / hospices / schools etc. can put in place to minimise exposure to known allergens.

Firstly, it is important to critically assess the potential for accidental exposure to allergens. When considering appropriate prevention strategies, you should take into account factors such as the allergen involved, the age of the patient and the severity of the allergy (based on information provided by their parent/carers and medical practitioner).

A risk assessment should be undertaken based on the person's usual routine, as well as plan for special circumstances such as parties, sports days, camps, incursions or excursions. It is useful to discuss and establish emergency procedures for various scenarios, e.g. for children, if an anaphylactic reaction occurs in the classroom, while on yard duty or after school, and practise these to assess how effective they are.

It is important to clarify the situation and ask questions – make sure that you completely understand the context of the patient / child and their environment.

Effective planning should:

- Put in place effective steps to prevent exposure to triggers (allergens) which are:
 - Thorough (all potential situations are considered)
 - Reasonable (appropriate)
 - Practicable (can be implemented and monitored)
 - Cost effective (can be implemented with minimal impact on budget)
- Actively involve all key stakeholders in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies
- Outline clear and concise day-to-day preventative management procedures
- Ensure that steps and preventative measures are well communicated and understood by all stakeholders
- Consider and account for likely changes in the environment, such as change of staff or other students / residents
- Ensure regular reviews of plan to ensure currency and relevancy of steps in place
- Ensure each staff member has adequate training and knowledge of allergies, anaphylaxis and emergency procedures