

Section L:

SPECIALIZED HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your comments on the Special Education Plan. All feedback must be received by February 28, 2026.](#)

Purpose of the Standard

To provide details of the board's specialized health support services to the ministry and the public.

Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings

The provision of health support services to students in school settings is governed by the Ministry of Education [Policy/Program Memorandum 81 \(The Provision of Health Support Services in Schools\)](#) and [Policy/Program Memorandum 161 Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions \(Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, and/or Epilepsy in School\)](#). These policy documents outline the shared responsibility for the provision of health support services amongst the Ministries of Education, Health, and Children, Community and Social Services:

“Supporting students with health/medical conditions in schools is complex and a whole-school approach is needed where education and community partners, including health care professionals, have important roles to play in promoting student health and safety and in fostering and maintaining healthy and safe environments in which students can learn” (PPM 161).

The safety and well-being of all students is a shared responsibility of the Board, staff, schools, families, students, health care providers and third-party health care providers. Providing health, medical, and/or disability supports empowers students as confident and capable learners to reach their full potential for self-management of their health, medical conditions and/or disabilities.

The Board collaborates with parents/legal guardians to support a safe environment for their children while at school and during school-related activities. An Individual Plan of

Care outlines the management of known conditions and is created for students who are at known risk for specific medical emergencies and who require daily routine management that may occur at school. An Individual Plan of Care will be referenced in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), where applicable, and in accordance with page E13 of the Ministry of Education Policy and Resource Guide [Special Education in Ontario – Kindergarten to Grade 12](#).

Partnerships

The TDSB continues to partner with the Toronto Region Core Service Group, which includes Surrey Place Centre as the lead agency with overall responsibility for implementing the model, Community Living Toronto, Family Service Toronto, Youth Link, and Toronto Central Ontario Health at Home - School Health Support Services. Following extensive consultation, the Core Service Group developed the [MCCSS Guidelines](#).

Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings - Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81 (PPM 81)

The Ontario Ministry of Education's [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 81: Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings](#) addresses delivery of services that extend beyond educational services and are not included in the normal preventive health programs already provided by boards of health to school children within the school context. Responsibility for the direct provision of these services at the local level is shared by school boards, Ontario Health at Home (OHaH) - School Health Support Services Program of the Ministry of Health, and agencies operating under the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

TDSB establishes its policies for the provision of these support services under [PO92 Student Health Support](#), and the corresponding procedures, including [PR536 Medication](#), [PR563 Anaphylaxis](#), [PR 607 Diabetes Management](#) and [PR714 Asthma Management](#). For more information, please see [PPM 161 Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions \(anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes and/or epilepsy\) in Schools](#). These policies define administrative procedures, personnel roles, and routine safeguards. The TDSB works in collaboration with local boards of health and local Home Care Program administrators.

The procedures for the administration of medication provide:

1. That such procedures be applied only to those services, requested by the parents/legal guardians and prescribed by a physician and/or nurse practitioner, which must be provided during school hours
2. That a request for the service and the authorization to provide such service be made in writing through [Form 536A – Administration of Prescribed Medication](#) by the parents/legal guardians and the physician, specifying the name of medication, the medical condition, the method of administration including the dosage and time

of administration, the frequency, the dates for which the authorization applies, the impact of a missed dose, and the possible side effects, if any

3. That the storage and safekeeping requirements for any labelled medication be stated
4. That a record of administration be maintained which includes the student's name, date of birth, school name, date, name of medication, time of provision, dosage given, name of person designated to administer medication, special instructions for administering medication, and any instructions/comments regarding administration
5. That the telephone numbers of the parents/legal guardians and physician be readily accessible in the school
6. That the medication be administered in a manner which allows for sensitivity and privacy and which encourages the student to take an appropriate level of responsibility for their medication

School boards are responsible for the administration of medication where such medication has been prescribed for use during school hours and where students require assistance with its administration. For students with physical disabilities, school boards provide such services as lifting and positioning, assistance with mobility, feeding and toileting, and general maintenance exercises. Boards are also responsible for necessary speech remediation, correction, and rehabilitation programs.

At the request of a school board, the OHaH - School Health Support Services Program of the Ministry of Health is responsible for assessing student needs, and for providing such services as injection of medication, sterile intermittent sterile intermittent catheterization, manual expression of the bladder, stoma care, postural drainage, suctioning, and tube feeding. The Ministry of Health is also responsible for intensive clinical occupational therapy and physiotherapy, and speech pathology treatment, and may assist school boards in the training and direction of school board staff performing certain other support services if the training services are not available through pre-existing internal school- board staff. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is responsible for ensuring the provision of health support services in children's residential care and treatment facilities.

Clarification of PPM 81 Re: Catheterization and Suctioning

Following implementation of [PPM 81, Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings](#), a Memorandum to Regional Directors of Education differentiated between procedures that may be performed by the student, parents/legal guardians, or other trained personnel, and procedures requiring the services of a qualified healthcare professional. The following points of clarification were made in the Memorandum:

- Clean intermittent catheterization and shallow surface suctioning are recognized as part of a child's normal toileting and hygiene needs
- School board administrators are encouraged to meet with the local OHaH Program Care Coordinators to review, and where necessary, make any appropriate modification to current practices

In response to PPM 81 and to provide further clarity around responsibilities, TDSB Operational Procedure [PR 580 – Clean Intermittent Catheterization and Suctioning, Lifting, Positioning, Physical Management and Activities of Daily Living](#) was established. The current TDSB Model for Provision of Specialized Health Support Services follows in the chart.

Catheterization

Type	Administered by	Provided by	Training & Direction	Consultation
Clean intermittent	Child aide or other personnel; student, as applicable	School Board	Parents Legal Guardians, Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
Sterile intermittent	Health Care Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health

Indwelling care of an indwelling catheter is usually performed by the parents/legal guardians and is not required in the school setting.

School board personnel should make arrangements with parents/legal guardians with respect to emergency needs.

Suctioning

Type	Administered by	Provided by	Training & Direction	Consultation
Shallow surface (e.g., oral or nasal suction)	Aide or other personnel	School Board	Parents/Legal Guardians, Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
Deep (e.g., throat and/or chest suction or drainage)	Health Care Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health

Where a child is admitted to a treatment program operated and/or funded by the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Community and Social Services and attends an educational program offered by the TDSB in the treatment facility, it is expected that the present policies under PPM 81 will continue.

Model for Provision of Specialized Health Support Services

Support Service	Administered by	Provided by	Training and Direction	Consultation
Oral Medication	Pupil as authorized	Pupil	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
	Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers as authorized	Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
	Aide or other personnel	School Board	School Board Physician/Parent /Legal Guardian	Local Board of Health
Injection of Medication	Pupil as authorized	Pupil	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
	Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers as authorized	Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers	Attending Physician	Local Board of Health
	Health Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	School Board
Catheterization, Manual expression of bladder/ stoma, drainage/ suctioning, Tube feeding	Health Professional	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	School Board
Lifting and Positioning, Assistance with Mobility, Feeding, Toileting	Aide or other personnel	School Board	School Board and/or Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health
Therapies: Physiotherapy/ Occupational: Intensive clinical (treatment)	Qualified therapist	Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community, and Social Services	Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community and Social Services	Ministry of Health and/or Children, Community, and Social Services
General maintenance exercises	Aide	School Board	School Board and/or Ministry of Health	School Board and/or Ministry of Health

Speech pathology (treatment of moderate - severe articulation, stuttering and voice disorders)	Speech Pathologists	Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services	School Board and/or Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	School Board and/or Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
All Services in Children's Residential Care/ Treatment Facilities	Aides/Health Professional	Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	Ministry of Health

*The previously known Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) and Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) was renamed as [Ontario Health at Home \(OHaH\)](#).

Specialized Health Support Services

Specialized Health Support Services	Agency or position of person who performs the service	Eligibility criteria for students to receive the service	Position of person who determines eligibility to receive the service and the level of support	Criteria for determining when the service is no longer required	Procedures for resolving disputes about eligibility and level of support (if available)
Administration of Prescribed Medications	TDSB Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) / Caregiver(s) , student where applicable, or OHaH	OHaH	TDSB Staff and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	Assessed by TDSB Staff, community-based healthcare professionals, and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with OHaH Care Coordinator
Assistance with Mobility	TDSB, OHaH – where student has 1:1 nursing	TDSB/OHaH	TDSB Staff or OHaH Care Coordinator	Assessed by TDSB Staff and OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with OHaH Care Coordinator
Catheterization	TDSB or OHaH	TDSB/OHaH	TDSB Staff or OHaH Care	Assessed by TDSB Staff, community-	TDSB Case Conference with OHaH

			Coordinator	based healthcare professionals, and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	Care Coordinator
Feeding	TDSB or OHaH – if via G-tube	TDSB/OHaH	TDSB Staff or OHaH Care Coordinator	Assessed by TDSB Staff or community-based healthcare professionals and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with OHaH Care Coordinator
Lifting and Positioning	TDSB	TDSB	TDSB Staff	Assessed by TDSB Staff	TDSB Case Conference
Nursing	OHaH	OHaH	OHaH Care Coordinator	Assessed by Community-based Health Care Professionals and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with OHaH Care Coordinator
Nutrition Services Provided by Registered Dietician	OHaH	OHaH	TDSB Staff and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB Staff and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB Case Conference with OHaH Care Coordinator
Occupational Therapy	TDSB/CTCs	TDSB/CTCs	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs service navigator	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs' service providers	TDSB Case Conference or CTCs' service navigation team
Physiotherapy	TDSB/CTCs	TDSB/CTCs	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs service navigator	TDSB Staff and/or CTCs service provider	TDSB Case Conference or CTCs service navigation team
Speech Therapy	Assessed and referred by TDSB	CTCs	TDSB SLPs and CTCs service	CTCs service provider	TDSB Case Conference or CTCs

	Speech- Language Pathologists (SLPs) / CTCs		navigator		service navigation team
Suctioning	TDSB or OHaH	OHaH	TDSB Staff and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB Staff and/or OHaH Care Coordinator	TDSB case conference, Parents/ Guardians/ Caregivers as authorized, community- based physician, and/or OHaH Care Coordinator
Toileting	TDSB	TDSB	TDSB Staff	Assessed by TDSB Staff	TDSB Case Conference

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