

GUIDANCE REGARDING REQUIREMENTS FOR CARE PROVIDED TO STUDENTS WITH LIFE-THREATENING ANAPHYLAXIS

The Pierce County Medical Society collaborates with school nurses to ensure the health and well-being of school students in the county and offers this vital information regarding anaphylaxis to meet this shared goal.

BACKGROUND

- **RCW.28A.210.380 Anaphylaxis Policy Guidelines describe the requirements for care provided with life-threatening anaphylaxis in the school environment.**
- **Licensed Health Providers (LHP) are directed to administer epinephrine immediately after exposure.**
- **Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) guidelines since 2009 have directed LHPs that epinephrine be given immediately to a student known to have anaphylaxis or has an exposure or suspected exposure to an allergen.**
- **In the school setting, it is no longer advised that oral antihistamine be given first or that treatment be delayed until symptoms develop, due to deaths that have occurred in schools related to delay of treatment.**



PHYSICIAN GUIDANCE

- Physicians or APPs should be aware of this longstanding rule when prescribing to students that OSPI requires epinephrine be administered first in lieu of an antihistamine.
- Further, due to school staff licensing requirements, Symjepi is discouraged for children who attend school.
 - Epinephrine rescue medication Symjepi is an EpiPen alternative, but unlike EpiPen, which comes in an auto-injector, Symjepi is a prefilled syringe that must be manually injected. State law prohibits delegating the administration of prefilled syringes to unlicensed school staff, so only school nurses can administer Symjepi. The Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction has indicated that many schools do not have full-time nurses and those that do cannot guarantee that a nurse will always be available. As a result, OSPI reported that some schools have not accepted Symjepi and that school nurses would be grateful if it is not prescribed.
- Physicians and health care professionals should consider only prescribing epinephrine rescue medications that come in auto-injectors to avoid potential barriers to administration.

References:

- RCW 28A.201.260 Public and private schools – Administration of medication
- Washington Office of Superintendent Public Instruction Guidelines for Medication Administration in Schools