



Early Childhood and Primary Education
Secondary Education
Technical and Further Education
Vocational Education and Training
Higher Education
Adult and Community Education

MEMORANDUM TO

**REGIONAL DIRECTORS
SCHOOL EDUCATION DIRECTORS
PRINCIPALS
TEACHERS AIDES (SPECIAL)**

**PROVISION OF SUPPORT AT SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
REQUIRING HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES**

Following discussions between the Department, the Public Service Association of NSW and the NSW Nurses' Association agreement has been reached on an updated version of the *Joint Statement on Role Boundaries in the Provision of Support at School for Students Requiring Health Care Procedures - 2005*. This document replaces both the 2002 and 1996 versions.

The joint statement addresses issues relating to the planning and support of ongoing health care needs students may have during school hours. The joint statement also details the need to develop a health care plan for each student who requires ongoing health care support. Many schools will already have such arrangements in place. More information on health care plans can be found at the following link:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studenthealth/index.php>

All teachers aides (special) who have volunteered to perform health care procedures are required to undertake relevant training:

- A two day DET training course in the knowledge and skills necessary to undertake health care procedures in schools.
- Specific training by a health care professional, in conjunction with the parent and or carer, in the knowledge and techniques to perform a procedure for a specific student, according to the student's individual health care plan.

Once this training is completed, the teachers aides (special) may be entitled to a Health Care Procedures allowance. The allowance form can be found at the following link:

<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/humanresources/sass/forms/sass4.PDF>

For further information regarding the health care procedures, please refer to the attached document - *Joint Statement on Role Boundaries in the Provision of Support at School for Students Requiring Health Care Procedures - 2005*

For further information regarding the implementation of the Joint Statement please contact Neale Waddy, Disability Programs Directorate on telephone (02) 9244 5860.

For further information regarding the training of teachers aides (special) please contact Laurie McCormack, SAS Staff Professional Learning & Development on telephone (02) 9561 8463.

For any queries regarding this memo, please contact Leanne Beggs, Industrial Awards and Conditions on telephone (02) 9561 8054.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Riordan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Peter Riordan
General Manager
Industrial Relations and Employment Services
28 July 2005

**JOINT STATEMENT ON ROLE BOUNDARIES IN THE PROVISION
OF SUPPORT AT SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS REQUIRING
HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES - 2005**

*The NSW Department of Education and Training
The Public Service Association of NSW
and
The NSW Nurses' Association*

This statement replaces:

- *Joint Statement on Role Boundaries in the Provision of Support at School for Students Requiring Health Care Procedures – 2002; and*
- *Joint Statement on Role Boundaries in the Provision of Support at School for Students Requiring Health Care Procedures – 1996.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The *Joint Statement on Role Boundaries in the Provision of Support at School for Students Requiring Health Care Procedures* (Joint Statement) has been developed to assist school principals and teachers aides (special) of the NSW Department of Education and Training to:

- identify those activities in relation to health care support in schools which are the responsibility of the school;
- provide a basis for the development of local cooperative arrangements in health care service delivery and support with local health care professionals and service providers;
- support students to develop independence in their health care needs where possible; and
- ensure teachers aides (special) understand the special consideration process in terms of the voluntary nature of the procedures, the need for training and the allowance paid when performing the additional health care roles.

1.2 The Department of Education and Training, the Public Service Association of NSW and the NSW Nurses' Association support the Joint Statement.

1.3 The Joint Statement aims to facilitate local cooperation and service delivery by establishing sensible and practical distinctions between the responsibilities of the parties, whilst providing for a degree of local flexibility in recognition of the fact that local operational circumstances may vary.

1.4 The signatories to the agreement acknowledge the essential requirement for the development of individual health care plans for students with significant health care needs and the need for general and specific training in health care procedures for teachers aides (special).

- 1.5 The signatories to the Joint Statement acknowledge the need for consultation and collaboration in establishing clear lines of responsibility that support students with health care needs.

2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The provision of support at school for students requiring health care procedures involve procedures, which as a consequence of the student's disability or health condition, require the involvement and direct assistance of another person.
- 2.2 When planning the enrolment of a student with health care needs the following will be considered by the principal, or other relevant staff including teachers aides (special):
- a) need to safeguard the safety and welfare of the student;
 - b) type and level of health care support required by the student;
 - c) availability of health care support services from trained providers;
 - d) willingness of teachers aides (special) to perform health care procedures;
 - e) expressed wishes of the parents or caregivers;
 - f) liaison with parents, caregivers, and health care professionals, when available;
 - g) training and development needs of school staff;
 - h) availability of school resources, and provision of appropriate facilities; and
 - i) protocols for specific health care procedures as detailed in section 4 of the Joint Statement; see 4.1(a), 4.2(a), 4.3(a).
- 2.3 Schools will request the involvement of local health care professionals and services for direct support to perform health care procedures for students and to provide advice and information, training, monitoring and supervision of trained teachers aides (special).
- 2.4 Planning for the individual health care needs of students, which will take place prior to attendance where possible, may include the involvement of the student, parents and caregivers, disability programs consultant, school staff, and local health care and allied health professionals and services, including doctors, community nurses, therapists, ambulance services and hospitals.
- 2.5 In the first instance, schools should investigate arrangements which may be necessary to meet a student's health care needs including:
- a) parent/caregiver attendance at the school to perform the procedure;
 - b) attendance at the school by a health care professional (eg registered nurse); and

- c) renegotiation with the student's medical practitioner and parent or caregiver of the specific procedure or the timing of the procedure.

Only where provision for a student's health care needs cannot be met in this manner should special consideration approval involving a teachers aide (special) be considered.

- 2.6 All relevant staff should be involved in the development of the student's health care plan. Principals, teachers, parents/guardian/caregivers and teachers aides (special) are required to sign the health care plan and application for special consideration, if necessary.

3. OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the Joint Statement are to:

- 3.1 ensure that teachers aides (special) demonstrate awareness of the voluntary nature of their role under the Joint Statement by signing the application for special consideration to indicate their willingness to perform the health care procedure;
- 3.2 support the enrolment and attendance of students requiring health care procedures, within existing resource provisions;
- 3.3 provide a safe learning environment in which the school provides or arranges for the provision of appropriate health care support;
- 3.4 ensure that individual employees of the Department of Education and Training work within statutory provisions and the general obligations of duty of care and are provided with appropriate legal support and protection;
- 3.5 ensure that Department of Education and Training staff, school communities and health professionals involved in health care support at schools understand their roles and responsibilities; and
- 3.6 provide accreditation in health care procedures for teachers aides (special) through training and development provided by the Department of Education and Training. (See 7. Training and Accreditation).

4. SPECIFIC HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY TEACHERS AIDES (SPECIAL)

4.1 Tube Feeding

- (a) All necessary assistance is to be given to students with feeding. This includes feeding via a gastrostomy or naso-gastric tube.

- (b) Teachers aides (special) will not perform gastrostomy or nasogastric tube insertion, including replacement of dislodged tubes. The individual health care plan will specify the action to be taken if a nasogastric or gastrostomy tube is dislodged.
- (c) All tube feeding procedures must be performed using standard precautions for infection control.
- (d) The tube feeding procedure will be in accordance with the detailed instructions and information in the student's individual health care plan.
- (e) For each student the teachers aides (special) will be required to be familiar with the type of equipment and methods of feeding.
- (f) Specific training in the use of the feeding method required by each student will be provided by a qualified health professional in collaboration with the parent and/or caregiver (see Section 7 Training and Accreditation).

4.2 Suctioning

- (a) In all instances where a student requires suctioning, schools must apply for approval for special consideration when a teachers aide (special) is required to perform the procedure (see 5. Special consideration).
- (b) Teachers aides (special) will only perform shallow suctioning. Shallow suctioning includes removal of secretions from the mouth, nose or around the tracheostomy tube.
- (c) Teachers aides (special) will not perform tracheostomy tube changes. The individual health care plan will specify the emergency action to be taken if a tracheostomy tube is dislodged or significantly blocked.
- (d) All suctioning procedures must be performed using standard precautions for infection control.
- (e) Where suctioning is required the procedure will be in accordance with the detailed instructions and information in the student's individual health care plan.
- (f) For each student the teachers aides (special) will be required to be familiar with the type of equipment and methods of suctioning.
- (g) Specific training in the use of the suctioning method required by each student will be provided by a qualified health professional in collaboration with the parent and/or caregiver (see Section 7 Training and Accreditation).

4.3 Toileting

- a) All necessary assistance is to be provided to students with toileting. This includes assisting with self-catheterisation or catheter drainage equipment (urethral or suprapubic).
- b) Teachers aides (special) will not perform insertion of an indwelling urinary catheter.
- c) It is recognized by all parties that teachers aides (special) are not qualified to train students to undertake this procedure and therefore students who cannot self catheterize must be provided with training by qualified health care professionals.
- d) In all instances where a student requires clean intermittent catheterisation, schools must apply for approval for special consideration when a teachers aide (special) has agreed to perform the procedure (see 5. Special consideration).
- e) If clean intermittent catheterization is required appropriate facilities must be provided.
- f) All assistance with clean intermittent catheterisation (including self catheterisation) procedures must be provided using standard precautions for infection control.
- g) Where clean intermittent catheterisation is required the procedure will be in accordance with the detailed instructions and information in the student's individual health care plan.
- h) Specific training in the use of the catheterisation method required by each student will be provided by a qualified health professional in collaboration with the parent and/or caregiver (see Section 7 Training and Accreditation).

5. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 Where a student's health care needs call for health care procedures beyond the protocols detailed in 4.1(a), 4.2(a), and 4.3(a) of the Joint Statement, the student's individual health care plan needs to be negotiated on enrolment at the school with the involvement of the disability programs consultant.
- 5.2 Applications for special consideration must be forwarded on the appropriate form to the State Office of the Department of Education and Training prior to the enrolment and attendance of the student. If this is not possible, alternative arrangements must be made for the student until the application has been approved by the Health Care Joint Committee. In each case the school must facilitate the involvement of parents or caregivers, staff and the medical practitioner in the application for special consideration. The specific needs of the

student, the procedure to be used and the training required must be considered.

- 5.3 The approval process will be undertaken by the Health Care Joint Committee, consisting of representatives of the signatories to the Joint Statement.

6. CONSENT

- 6.1 Parents or caregivers or, where appropriate, the student must provide informed consent for the performance of a specific health care procedure at school.
- 6.2 The parent or caregiver or the student, where appropriate, and the principal must sign the individual health care plan.
- 6.3 The parent or caregiver or student, where appropriate, and the principal must sign the application for special consideration.

7. TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION

- 7.1 Teachers aides (special) who have agreed to perform the specified health care procedures will be required to undertake training and development in health care procedures. The training will include assessment of competence and knowledge. The two types of training required are:
- training in "Health Care Procedures in Schools". This training is provided through a specific training package by the Department of Education and Training and includes the knowledge and skills which a teachers' aide (special) will require to deliver health care procedures in schools. The signatories to the Joint Statement will be consulted on the training content and delivery; and
 - specific training by a health care professional in the knowledge and techniques to perform a procedure for a specific student, according to the student's individual health care plan.
- 7.2 Teachers aides (special) will be accredited to perform health care procedures through the training course provided by the Department of Education and Training. Accredited teachers aides (special) will hold a Health Care Procedures in Schools Statement of Attainment.
- 7.3 Accreditation will be for 24 months after which the teachers aide (special) must demonstrate competence and knowledge for recertification during attendance at a recertification course.
- 7.4 Accreditation is monitored by the SAS Staff and Management Development Unit in Professional Practice Directorate.

8. ALLOWANCE

Teachers aides (special) who have agreed to perform one of the procedures as outlined at Section 4 above, who have received the appropriate training and who are performing the procedure are entitled to receive the health care procedures allowance. Application forms are available on the Department's intranet site at:

<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/directorates/personnel/sass/forms/sass4.PDF>

9. DUTY OF CARE

The signatories to the Joint Statement acknowledge the importance of schools meeting the duty of care owed to all students, including those students who require the performance of health care procedures.

SIGNED by the General Manager of Industrial Relations and Employment Services

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

on the 7 day of JUNE, 2005.

Peter Riando
.....

in the presence of

[Signature]
.....
(witness)

SIGNED by the General Secretary
PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF NSW
on the day of

[Signature]
.....

in the presence of

[Signature]
.....
(witness)

SIGNED by the General Secretary (Acting)
NSW NURSES' ASSOCIATION
on the day of

Judith A. Phipps
.....

in the presence of

Maggie [Signature]
.....
(witness)

GLOSSARY

Clean intermittent catheterisation Clean intermittent catheterisation is mainly used for people with abnormal bladder function. This entails the insertion of a plastic tube (catheter) of an appropriate size and type through the urine passage (urethra) into the bladder.

Duty of care The duty of care is the duty of all school staff to take reasonable care to protect students against risks of injury, which reasonably should have been foreseen.

Enteral or 'tube' feeding Enteral or 'tube' feeding is a term that encompasses different methods for feeding that bypass the mouth and normal swallowing function.

Gastrostomy A gastrostomy is a surgical opening into the stomach. A Gastrostomy tube delivers nourishment through a tube or a 'button' and is normally used for longer term enteral feeding.

Health care plan A written individual health care plan must be developed by the principal, or other relevant staff members, to support each student with a significant health care need that requires the support of another person during school hours. NB The need for individual health care plans in the context of students who do not require health care procedures may be determined in other ways. For example, many students requiring support in the administration of medication only will not need such a plan. Individual health care plans must contain the information and detailed actions required to provide routine and emergency care.

Health care procedures Health care procedures are performed to maintain the health of students while at school. The health care procedures that may be performed by trained teachers aides (special) under the Joint Statement are tube feeding, suctioning and clean intermittent catheterisation.

"Health care procedures in schools" This is the title of the compulsory accredited training module for teachers aides (special) who support students who require the performance or supervision of the health care procedures under the Joint Statement.

Indwelling catheterisation Entails the insertion of a plastic tube (catheter) of an appropriate size and type through the urine passage (urethra) into the bladder, which remains insitu attached to a drainage bag.

Nasogastric Tube A nasogastric tube is used to deliver fluids and nourishment into the stomach. This occurs via a tube that is inserted into the stomach. The tube is inserted through the nose, passed into the back of the throat and into the oesophagus (food passage) and is normally used for shorter term enteral feeding.

Special consideration Teachers aides (special) must have approval of special consideration to perform tube insertion (or invasive components) of

the procedures included under the Joint Statement. Representatives of the signatories to the Joint Statement consider written applications for special consideration from the school and parent or caregiver or, where appropriate, the student.

Standard precautions Standard precautions incorporate the major features of Universal Precautions (UP), Blood and Body Fluid Precautions (BBFP) and Body Substance Isolation (BSI) and apply to everybody, regardless of their diagnosis or presumed infectious state. Standard precautions apply to:

- blood;
- all body substances, secretions and excretions except sweat, regardless of whether or not they contain visible blood;
- non-intact skin; and
- mucous membranes.

Standard precautions are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infection.

Suctioning Suctioning of the nose and mouth involves the use of special equipment that uses negative pressure. This procedure primarily reduces the risk of obstructing the normal breathing airways and aids in removing mucus and respiratory (breathing) fluids that cannot be cleared by the normal coughing mechanism.

Teachers aide (special) A teachers aide (special) is a member of the school administrative and support staff employed as a short term temporary, long term temporary or permanent teachers aide (special) under the *Crown Employees (School Administrative and Support Staff) Award*. The teachers aide (special) statement of duties is contained in section 1.1.3.2.6 of chapter 1 of the Handbook for Non Teaching Staff in Schools.

Tracheostomy A tracheostomy is a surgical opening into the trachea (windpipe). A small tracheostomy tube, usually made of metal or plastic is inserted into the opening. A tracheostomy provides for an alternative way of breathing. This is usually needed to bypass an obstruction in the normal airway, to help remove mucus and to help support ventilation (breathing).