

A Call to Monitor and Collect Data for the Use of Injectable, November 2009

Epinephrine in Kansas Schools

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The epinephrine hearings conducted in the fall of 2008 by the Kansas Legislative Education Committee, as well as the subsequent legislation that was introduced, amended, and passed in the spring of 2010 created opportunities for much discussion throughout our state. Specifically, the legislation addressed the stocking of epinephrine in schools for use in the event of signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis in a student or staff member during school, while on school grounds, or while participating in a school sponsored event. Over the past 15 years, schools have seen an increasing number of students with prescriptions for epinephrine due to an individual history of severe allergy. Less common is the stocking of epinephrine in the event it is needed by someone without an individually prescribed physician order. House Bill 2008 requires schools that desire to stock epinephrine to have both a physician authority and a consulting pharmacist. The Kansas School Nurse Organization, Inc. (KSNO) provided testimony in Topeka several times during the past year, remaining neutral with respect to the question of stock epinephrine, but supporting the vital role of the registered nurse in the school setting for crisis preparedness and response. Many times during testimony questions were posed as to “how often epinephrine is administered in Kansas schools.” To date, Kansas does not collect this data. KSNO also conducted surveys and researched the issue in Kansas as well as with school nursing colleagues across the nation. Massachusetts has been a leader in gathering information each time epinephrine is administered in the school setting for their state. Permission was obtained to utilize their “Report of Epinephrine Administration Form.” Current KSNO President, Chris Tuck, asked me if I, as Professional Standards Chair, would take on the responsibility of tallying data submitted by Kansas nurses.

KSNO is asking the assistance of all Kansas school nurses in completing the accompanying form (also on the web site) each time epinephrine is administered. The form should be completed both for students with a known risk for anaphylaxis who have an individual order and for any time epinephrine is utilized by a district that has decided to stock epinephrine according to HB 2008. The completion of this form will provide baseline data regarding epinephrine administration in schools, data to assist with future discussions that may ensue related to this topic. As practicing school nurses we must “step up to the plate” to document and define our role in protecting the health and safety of our students and staff and to educate stakeholders in the valuable asset we are in schools. Please feel free to contact me (Cindy Galemore) with any questions. This form may be submitted via email, regular mail, or as an email attachment (galemorec@olatheschools.com). Thank you for your assistance!