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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## Consultation Document

# Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs

Date of issue: 24 February 2016  
Action required: Responses by 29 April 2016

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.

**Overview** The *Access to Education and Support for Children and Young People with Medical Needs* guidance document was originally published in 2010. The revised draft version, now titled *Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs*, is shorter and takes account of changes to equalities legislation and new guidance on keeping Salbutamol Inhalers on school premises.

**How to respond** Responses to this consultation should be entered into the response form provided online and emailed/posted to the address below, to arrive by **29 April 2016** at the latest.

**Further information and related documents** **Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.**

The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at [www.gov.wales/consultations](http://www.gov.wales/consultations)

**Contact details** For further information:

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## **Data protection**

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

## **What are the main issues?**

Medical conditions can have a lasting effect on children and young people's social development, ability and confidence in educational attainment. It is important to ensure seamless support services are available to meet their needs and allow continuity in accessing educational opportunities at school, at home, in hospital, or another setting and in cooperation with parents/carers and the school the learner normally attends.

Additionally, the 2014 guidance document 'Guidance on the use of emergency salbutamol inhalers in schools in Wales' was released in 2014, but was not subject to a consultation at that time. Question 3 of the consultation response form asks if the content of this guidance is adequate, and allows respondents the opportunity to provide feedback on this guidance document.

## **Where are we now?**

The current guidance document "Access to Education and Support for Children and Young People with Medical Needs" provides advice and guidance on meeting the educational needs of children and young people with medical needs in the education setting. The guidance offers advice on how schools formulate policies to support children and young people with medical needs.

## **What is the Evidence for change?**

A decision was made to review schools' and local authorities' use of the current guidance document, in order to establish if the support of learners with healthcare needs is consistent across Wales. The following stakeholders were engaged with during the review, which informed the preparation of this draft guidance document:

4 local authorities, 4 Local Health Boards, 4 nurseries, 20 primary schools (including Welsh medium), 20 secondary schools (including Welsh medium), 4 special schools, 4 Pupil Referral Units and 4 further education colleges. Specific staff within these settings were engaged with, including headteachers, first aiders, medical needs co-ordinators, admin staff and pupil wellbeing officers. The review also took account of the views of teaching unions.

The final report showed that the current guidance could be improved, in both content and structure. Only 40% of the education settings surveyed in the review have used the current Medical Needs document to inform the creation of their own medical needs policy/policies. Schools, health organisations and trade unions suggested that the guidance should be:

- Much shorter;
- Show clearly what can, and cannot, be done; and
- Simple, clear and more direct.

## What specific changes are we proposing?

A change to the title, presentation, structure and content of the *Access to Education and Support for Children and Young People with Medical Needs* guidance document. The draft revision of this document:

- Changes the title of the document to *Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs*
- Summarises the main existing legal duties
- Would issue some of the content as statutory guidance (presented in bold font)
- Sets out what is considered to be unacceptable practice
- Significantly reduces the length of the document, and improves its overall structure
- Includes a legal framework annex, which collates the main legal provisions associated with safeguarding the welfare of children with healthcare needs