

Policy 4.7 | Educator Health

Policy Date:	January 2017
Review Date:	Last reviewed date: 31/05/2018 Date for next Review: January 2019
Applies to:	Service Providers, Educators, Families
Related Policies and Forms:	F4.6 NSWIHCS Excursion Authority and Risk Management Plan 4.7 Vehicle (Transportation) Policy F4.7 Vehicle Safety Check Form
Material Sources:	Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 NQS A4

Policy Statement

NSW In-Home Childcare Services (NSWIHCS) must ensure that Educators engaged to work with children meet the criteria set by the Department of Education and Training as well as the service. Educator's health should be not impaired by either; poor health status, medical conditions or dependency on any medication or substances.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Educators working with children are properly screened and undergo a medical clearance from a registered doctor.

Educators have a duty of care to maintain their health and therefore are responsible in caring for children within the home environment.

Strategies and Practices

Planning Process

NSW In-Home Childcare Services advocates that every Educator contracted to work with children are of good health.

1. As part of the recruitment process Educators must provide evidence that they are fit to work with children.
2. A medical 'Fit for work' certificate is a requirement during the initial induction stages to ensure that educators have no existing illness that may impair their ability to care for young children.
3. Educators may be requested to provide an updated 'medical, fit for work' by the service.
4. Educators must disclose if they have any pre-existing illness which would affect their ability to care for children.
5. Educators should be aware of all safety and health factors in order to maintain a healthy working relationship with;
 - The family
 - The Service Provider
 - Children

Back Care and Manual Handling

NSW In-Home Childcare Services encourages all educators to minimise the risk of back injury by ensuring best practice:

- Wherever possible kneel, rather than bend over/down to avoid neck or back problems
- Carry children only when necessary -correct way to carry a child is with one arm under the child's buttocks and your other arm supporting the child's back, at the same time. Hold the child facing you as close to your body as possible.
- When lifting awkward loads be careful to lift with a balance and comfortable posture, ensuring load is as close to your body as possible.
- Use a ladder or step stool (not a chair) to reach for items on high shelf
- When lifting babies out of cots, lean close against the cot and raise the child as close as possible to your body. Do not stretch or over lift.
- Change nappies at a table at appropriate height
- When a child needs comforting, don't bend over, sit down at child's level and encourage the child to sit near you in order for you to be able to comfort the child.
- Don't lift child into car, if child is mobile encourage them to sit in car.

Stress Management

1. Stress is the body's natural response to pressures or demanding situations in which you find yourself in and are not confident if you can aptly cop effectively.

Causes of stress:

- Working long hours, overnights and on weekends
- Lack of break
- Conflict with families
- Non-payment of fees
- Needs and expectations of own family
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2. In order to reduce the risk and manage stress, you are encouraged to have measures in place:

- Build an honest, respectful relationship with your family and advocate open communication
- Set clear boundaries and clear guidelines
- Address any issues that may arise and find a resolution with positive outcomes for you and the family.
- Plan to take breaks/Holidays each year
- Attend regular training and up to date with service policies and procedures
- Pay attention to your personal health
- Debrief with your service provider of anything affecting your health

Pregnancy

3. Educators who are pregnant or contemplating pregnancy should be aware of special risks and take precautions.

- Advise the service provider and the family you are pregnant to ensure that you are not undertaking any duty that may impact on the pregnancy.
- A medical certificate may be requested by the service provider indicating a cease care date/or that you may continue to work
- Be aware of any pets the family may have e.g. cat
- Exposure to specific diseases may have an adverse effect on pregnancy e.g. Rubella (German measles) CMV (Cytomegalovirus), Firth Disease (erthythema infectiosum or parvovirus), chicken pox.
- Risk of back pain and injury may occur with the progression of the pregnancy, so it is important to maintain your health.

Procedures

1. Educators must follow safe work practices and conduct a safety check at the start of each session of care.
2. Any potential risk/hazard identified must be dealt with immediately with the family/ or if unable to work with the family with a suitable outcome, contact the service for assistance.
3. Educators are to seek assistance from others when carrying heavy loads if possible.
4. Educator is to maintain a safe and clean environment to ensure no trip hazards.
5. Educators are always to maintain their own health and safety.
6. Educators who are on medication, need to ensure this will not impact on their ability to care for the children in their care. Educator medication will need to be inaccessible for children. Best practice is to ensure any medication required by the educator to take is done so prior/after their care shift
7. Educators are to contact their service provider if they are unable to continue their care arrangement, so alternative arrangements for the family cared for is arranged.
8. Educators are to obtain a doctor's certificate after more than 2 days absence from a contagious infection before returning to the family home.