



# Health Conditions and the IEP Process

A Presentation from the Wisconsin Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program

Developed by the Southern Regional CYSHCN Center at the Waisman Center UCEDD



# Health is Critical to School Success

- Success in the classroom, in the community, and on the job requires that young people are healthy.
- Young people with life-long health issues need to learn early how to maintain and sustain health and wellness -- and to participate in their health care decisions.



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# WI schools provide many students with health services


- DPI is clear that every student with an IEP who requires nursing care, intervention or supervision must have a Health Care Plan written by a health care professional.
- The health plan is a document that provides direction to school staff who implement plans.
- The need and type of required services should also be referenced in the IEP.



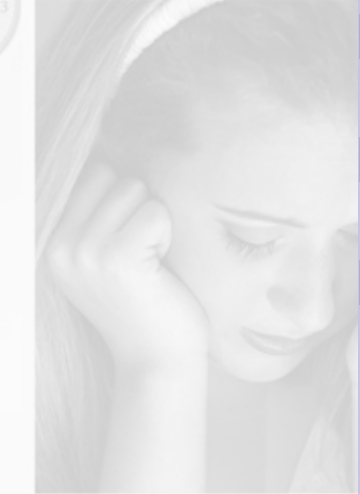
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Health also can be a part of the IEP process and documented in:

- The Present Level of Performance
  - The IEP Goals
  - The Supports and Services
  - The list of accommodations and modifications
- 



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# Health Information in the Present Level of Performance

- The present level must provide information in each area of need, including a clear descriptive statement of how the child is performing in specific areas.
- The PLOP also should include the student's strengths, interests and needs.



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# Present Level of Performance (cont)

- Any health issue or limitation can be incorporated into the PLOP if it describes how the child's disability affects the child's participation in school and recreational activities. (20 U.S.C. Section 1414 (d) (1) (A) of IDEA)



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# Present Level (cont.)

- In addition, other needs for supports, adaptations, accommodations, equipment, etc. related to the student's health concerns can be recorded in the PLOP.

# Sample statements for Present Level of Performance

- “John cannot verbally tell caregivers how to transfer him, making him reliant on his ed. Asst. throughout the day.”
- This year, Latrice missed 10 school days because of pressure sores. She needs to learn ways to move in her wheelchair to reduce risk of pressure sores so she doesn't miss school.”



# More IEP PLOP statements

- “Sarah knows which meds she takes daily. She needs reminders during lunch and PM recess.”
- “Sarah is beginning to recognize her asthma symptoms that indicate a need for her inhaler. But she needs more practice.”



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# More PLOP statements

- “Stella misses 3-4 days per month because of migraines. She has not returned for treatment in six months because she feels she isn’t benefitting. She is still unsure what triggers migraine onset.”
- “Tim easily becomes dehydrated, causing lack of focus. Tim is just beginning to recognize signs of dehydration.”



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# Transition and Present Levels of Performance

- Starting at age 14, IEPs can be more closely linked to post-school outcomes.
- Post-school outcomes can and should include as much self-care and independent management of health conditions as possible.



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# Transition Post-School Outcomes

- Employment and job training
- Post-secondary education
- Independent/home living
- Community Life
- Leisure and recreation



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# Sample Transition Present Level of Performance Statements

- “Ava does not yet know the symptoms of low blood sugar.”
- Jeb needs double the typical time during exams because of fatigue.”
- Tedi currently does not have a consistent way to communicate with medical care or school staff when she feels unwell.”

# Transition Present Level Statements (cont.)

- “Jermaine has not located an adult health care provider.”
- “Leah knows where the pharmacy is, but does not know how to call in prescription refills.”
- Pat needs to learn how medical side effects could affect his work performance and stamina for recreation activities.”

# Transition Sample Present Level of Performance Statements (cont.)

- “Pat needs to learn how medical side effects could affect his work performance and stamina for recreation activities.”
- “Monica needs to learn how her parents can remain involved in helping her make health care decisions after she turns 18.”
- “Oscar needs to be able to record presentations ahead of time because of social anxiety.”



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# IEP Goals and Objectives

- IEPs must include a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks explaining how we know the goal is met.
- Example: “Joe will independently solve math problems at the third grade level” will include benchmarks that show Joe knows his times tables, can solve double-digit word problems and knows how to tell time.



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# Health Information and IEP Goals

- Meeting health-related benchmarks may require support from any of these team members:
  - OT or PT
  - Speech therapist
  - Special education assistant
  - Social worker or psychologist
  - Regular or special education teacher

# Health Information and IEP Goals

- Sometimes goals are written for a student.
- Sometimes, a health activity or procedure is more appropriately performed by a registered nurse or other staff person who has had training.

# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks in the category of Independence/Self Help

- “Tim will monitor his urine output for quantity and color to assess for dehydration.”
- “John will practice a protocol for directing people on how to transfer him so he can follow school routines without 1-on-1 supports.”
- “Latrice will learn a routine of chair exercises that she uses during gym class to reduce the chance of pressure sores.”

# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks—Self Help (cont.)

- “Sarah will follow a picture schedule throughout the day to independently take her meds without adult prompt 4 out of 5 days per week.”
- “Tom will learn how to cath himself and clean up afterward so he can use the bathroom independently.”



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# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks—Self Help (cont.)

- “Pat will learn the signs of side effects caused by his meds so he can choose employment/recreation options suited to his stamina and interests.”
- “Stella will return to her physician to obtain a referral for management of her migraines and will chart her symptoms daily for 3 months to determine patterns of occurrence and contributing factors. She will share the chart with her physician.”

# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks—Self Help (cont.)

- “Stella will develop an increased awareness of the early warning signs of her migraines and will seek appropriate treatment.”
- Monica will meet with a health benefits counselor at least once during the first semester to learn about the range of decision-making options available before age 18.”



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# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks—Self Help (cont.)

- “Jermaine will develop interview questions and contact 2 adult care physicians to interview during first semester so he can locate an adult provider before age 21.”
- “Mimi will independently use a programmed alarm watch 9 out of 10 times as a prompt to request a visit to the nurse’s office to take her meds.”



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# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks—Communication

- “Tim will communicate with his Dynamite that he needs a water break when he starts to feel dehydrated 4 out of 5 times without a prompting question.”
- “Tedi will answer yes/no/I don’t know to a set of health-related questions on her Dynavox in preparation before each doctor’s appointment 3 out of 5 times.”



# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks—Communication

- “Leah will learn the phone number and rehearse a script to be able to call in her own prescription refills 3 out of 5 times.”
- “Josie will be able to tell school staff in all settings about her peanut allergy without prompts so she can participate across school/community settings without direct adult supervision.”



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# Sample Health-Related IEP Benchmarks—Communication

■ “Seb will communicate by hitting his Big Mac that he needs a break for repositioning 3 out of 5 times.”



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# Supports and Services Needed to Meet Health-Related Goals

- Once goals are drafted, IDEA says every IEP needs to include a statement of special education and related services delivered either directly to the student or on behalf of the student.



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# Supports and Services Needed to Meet Health-Related Goals

■ The law also says the IEP must include a statement about program changes or support for school staff that will help the child:

1. Move appropriately toward annual goals.
2. Be part of the gen. ed. Curriculum and learn as much of it as possible.
3. Be part of any school activities that any other children do.



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# Who Provides Supports?

- Related services are supports needed for a student to benefit from special education, including school health services. Related services also might include:
  - Transportation
  - OT/PT/speech
  - Psychological services
  - Therapeutic recreation
  - Modified physical education
  - Counseling



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# Who Provides Supports? (cont.)

- Learning protocols or how to describe a health condition might be supported by a related service provider, such as a speech therapist.
- A goal that works on skills in a specific subject area, such as physical education, might be the joint responsibility of a physical education teacher and a special education assistant.



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# Supports and Services Needed to Meet Health-Related Goals

- Some health-related goals can be carried out by a spec. ed. Asst. with training from a registered nurse.
- Initial skills training, such as learning to self-cath, would be done by an RN, but reinforcement and practice might come from a para-professional.
- Learning a transfer protocol might require training from an RN or OT/PT for school staff. (Training needs can be documented in the IEP)



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# Accommodations/Modifications

## Examples

- Permission to use the bathroom or visit the school nurse at any time to attend to XX health condition.
- Immediate access to water or inclusion of a water bottle throughout the day.
- Permission to have snacks at certain times because of blood sugar or other health problems.



# Accommodations/Modifications Examples

- Use of a Palm Pilot or laptop computer to keep track of medical data and schedules.
- Use of a picture schedule in order to keep track of daily routines and protocols.
- Use of an alarm watch to use in remembering medical schedules.
- Shortened school day or shortened class periods to accommodate health/stamina.



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# Accommodations/Modifications

## Examples

- Permission to carry an Epi-Pen on school field trips in case of exposure to allergens.
- Extra time for tests or presentations because of fatigue.
- Positioning in the classroom near the front to accommodate vision or attention issues.
- Provision of a darkened, quiet room when a migraine may begin to present.
- Institution of fragrance-free building policy to lessen chance of migraine onset.