

DayHab Protocol for Administration of Medication Including Treatment of Individuals with Asthma and Other Chronic Illness



Date effective: 8/2/2020
Reviews: 7/13/2020
Current revision: 7/14/2020

Applies to: Day Hab programs

Policy number: TEMP – C19 Day Hab Protocol for Administration of Medication Including Treatment of Individuals with Asthma and Other Chronic Illness
Regulatory reference: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information>

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People with moderate to severe asthma may be at higher risk of severe COVID-19.

Participants who have symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend Communitas Life Choices. Symptoms of asthma and COVID-19 may overlap, including cough and shortness of breath. Therefore, participants experiencing acute asthma attacks should not be attending Life Choices without approval by a healthcare provider; if an asthma attack starts at Life Choices, a participant may need a bronchodilator treatment before being sent home or before an ambulance arrives. The American Lung Association’s Model recommends using inhalers with disposable spacers/mouthpieces and nebulizers with disposable tubing with mask/mouthpieces. Inhalers and nebulizers should be used and cleaned according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, asthma treatments using inhalers with spacers (with or without face mask, according to each participant individualized treatment plan) are preferred over nebulizer treatments whenever possible.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, nebulizer treatments at Communitas should be reserved for participants who cannot use or do not have access to an inhaler (with or without spacer or face mask).

Nebulizer use will only occur in an outdoor area or room separate from all other participants that has a door that can close. The nurse who is assisting with the nebulizer treatment must don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including N95 mask, gloves, and eye protection.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, if a nebulizer treatment or use of peak flow meter is necessary at Communitas for a participant, the number of people present in the room should be limited to the participant and the nurse administering the treatment or peak flow meter. After the nebulizer treatment or use of peak flow meter, this room should undergo routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes leaving the room empty with the door closed and if possible opening a window for at least 30 minutes prior to thoroughly cleaning, as the use of a nebulizer can increase risk of the virus being aerosolized.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html>

Medication Administration

- All medications with the exception of nebulizer treatments will be administered in the nursing office with no other individuals present. Nursing staff will wear a mask and gloves during pouring and/or administration of medication, using proper hand hygiene before and after administration.
- If individual requires cup of water to help swallow medications, cup will immediately be disposed of in closed container and removed from building daily.
- Medications may be administered by Licensed Nurses only to participants of Day Habilitation programs during program hours, as prescribed by the individual's physician.
 - All medications administered are documented on the participant's Medication and Treatment Chart. Health care provider's orders, including standing orders, are valid for one year.
 - Controlled substances need to be renewed every six months. Resource material, such as the Drug Handbook, must be at the service site at all times.
 - Day Habilitation is not a pharmacy and does not dispense medications.
 - No medication is administered without a current physician's order as prescribed.
 - Proper medication orders contain the following information: Participant's full name, name of medication, dosage (including strength or concentration), frequency, instructions for use, including route of administration, a valid medication order date, specific directions for administration, and signature of prescriber.
 - Pre-pouring medications is not allowed.
 - All medications must be in properly labeled medication containers.
 - In the event of a change of medication, a physician's order must accompany the medication change. Label change should also be requested by pharmacy. A Direction Change Alert should be attached to the label until new label is available.
 - All medications are distributed through the Health Services Coordinator (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) or the relief nursing staff.
 - In the case of a medical emergency due to a medication occurrence, staff will follow emergency procedures (as outlined in the Emergency and Disaster Plan policy and procedures).