

GUIDE 6: MEDICAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITIONS MANAGEMENT

Defence is committed to providing a safe environment for youth who participate in Defence youth activities. Understanding and managing medical conditions, as well as physical fitness requirements of participants is a critical aspect of this commitment.

The level and type of engagement will influence the degree to which the management of medical and physical conditions is required.

This guide supports the standards and procedures for operational guidance outlined in the Defence Youth Manual. It also aims to help personnel:

- a. consider planning requirements in order to meet obligations under the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011
- b. obtain medical information in order to implement reasonable adjustments to create an inclusive environment where relevant
- c. gather and manage medical and physical information as part of a risk management plan
- d. communicate with parents/caregivers
- e. respond to medical situations in planned intentional youth engagement situations.

Planning requirements

Under the WHS Act (2011), workers must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and ensure that their actions or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others. Defence personnel conducting youth activities are responsible for ensuring that planned activities are suitable for youth participation. Adjustments can be made, as far as reasonably practicable, to provide a level of inclusiveness for youth with medical or fitness limitations.

SCENARIO

Prior to being accepted into a Defence Work Experience Placement a youth has declared they are on crutches due to a sporting injury. A reasonable adjustment to accommodate the youth's needs may be that the youth will attend the Work Experience Placement but not participate in some physical training activities. They could still be included through roles like score keeping or acting as a timing monitor. With reasonable adjustments, youth can stay connected and involved in ways that work for them and while aligning with the goals of the program.

Gathering Medical Information

Personnel conducting youth engagement activities are responsible for ensuring the registration process includes a declaration of any medical or fitness conditions, where appropriate. This includes informing participants that they are required to notify Defence about any significant changes or injuries to their medical or fitness status that occur between registration and the start of the activity. This information will assist in:



- a. promoting the safety and well-being of those involved
- b. providing tailored support
- c. managing risks
- d. enabling Defence personnel to make informed decisions.

The collection of medical and fitness information should be treated in accordance with Defence Youth Manual and the [Defence Privacy Policy](#).

Privacy

Privacy matters relevant to this guide are managed in accordance with the Defence Youth Manual and the [Defence Privacy Policy](#).

Disclosure of Personal Information¹. Defence personnel may disclose or authorise disclosure of personal information held by Defence about a youth or any other person to the youth's parents/guardians/specified next of kin or a responsible third party if:

- a. the youth has been involved in a youth protection event/incident (Defence Youth Manual Section 3, Chapter 3)
- b. they are reasonably satisfied in the circumstances that it is necessary and appropriate for the personal information to be disclosed to ensure the medical, protection and wellbeing of the youth.

Factors that may be relevant when deciding whether to release personal information include, but are not limited to:

- a. any wishes expressed by the youth
- b. the nature of the personal information and its relevance to the youth's medical, protection and wellbeing
- c. the nature and seriousness of the youth protection event/incident
- d. whether or not the youth or other person to whom the personal information relates is willing and able to self-disclose the information.

What to do if a condition has been declared

If a medical or physical condition has been declared, Defence personnel should work in partnership with the youth and/or their parents/guardians to identify and consider reasonable and appropriate support strategies that may be implemented.

If a youth's medical condition may pose a risk to themselves or others, they may be required to provide a medical clearance from their health practitioner, as a condition of participation. (Enclosure 1 – Health Clearance form provides the basis for requests for medical clearance). This form is optional and units may modify the form to best suit their needs.

Individual Management Plan (IMP). Where appropriate, youth programs may initiate the creation of an IMP in consultation with the youth and their medical practitioner/family.

¹ DI-MJEP1 – describes the circumstances in which it may be appropriate for Defence personnel to disclose personal information in relation to youth protection incidents

The requirement is generally determined by the medical condition and degree of interaction. The plan should include the following key elements:

- a. Personal information – the youth's name, date of birth, photograph and emergency contact details
- b. Medical and/or physical condition(s) – a clear description of the condition and any relevant medical history, including frequency, severity and last time the condition occurred (if appropriate)
- c. Potential impacts of condition – how the condition may affect the youth's ability to fully participate in the activity
- d. Adjustments required – provide what adjustments are requested to assist the youth in being able to participate in the activity
- e. Medications or medical devices – specify what medication or devices are required. Include how medication is to be stored, dosage, timing, how to administer it and whether the youth can self-administer the medications
- f. Symptoms – list any signs or symptoms to watch out for
- g. Emergency Action Plan - outline the first aid response
- h. Expectations and responsibilities – clarify the expectations and responsibilities for all involved in the management of the health condition while participating in the activity

IMPs must be stored in accordance with record management and privacy guidance in the Defence Youth Manual and a hard copy should be carried by the supervisor of the activity.

Commanders, managers and supervisors of youth activities have the authority to cancel the participation of an individual if they cannot safely manage the youth's requirements.

SCENARIO

Sixteen-year-old Morgan was excited to attend an overnight Defence youth camp. On the registration form, Morgan's guardian noted that he had moderate asthma. The camp organisers recognised the importance of managing Morgan's medical needs, while ensuring he could safely participate in camp activities.

The camp coordinator contacted Morgan's guardian to gather detailed information including his asthma action plan, medication schedule, symptoms to watch out for and steps to take in an emergency. The coordinator used this information to create an individual management plan (IMP) for Morgan.

The staff reviewed Morgan's IMP and identified that Morgan's asthma was triggered by cold air and physical exertion. They made adjustments to the camp activity schedule so that early morning outdoor games were pushed to a later timeslot, to avoid Morgan being physically active in the cold morning air.

Morgan and his guardian were provided with clear expectations of Morgan's responsibilities in order for him to attend camp. He was required to have his medication

with him at all times. The medication was to be in a bag with Morgan's name on it, so that camp supervisors could identify the bag quickly in an emergency.

Morgan was required to sleep in accommodation near (but not with) the camp supervisors, in case he needed support overnight.

The lead camp supervisor was assigned to check in twice-daily with Morgan on camp to ensure he had his medication.

Morgan attended the camp, and participated in most of the activities. Sometimes, he opted for a less physical alternative during team challenges, but he always felt safe and supported knowing that staff understood his needs.

Managing allergies

Food allergies can be potentially life threatening. Where supervisors have been notified that a participant has an allergy, clearly articulated and effective procedures are to be implemented, using an IMP or similar to mitigate the risk to the individual.

Managing medicine and medical equipment

Youth and/or their parents/guardians are responsible for the correct management of their medical equipment, medication and other medical related consumables. Defence personnel will provide support where possible.

Managing contagious conditions

In the event that a participant in an activity has, or is suspected of having, a contagious condition action must be taken in accordance with the relevant State or Territory Health Department guidelines and directions from the Public Medical Officer (PHMO) at the Public Medical Unit: www.medical.gov.au

Providing first aid

First aid is immediate assistance provided to a sick or injured person until appropriate medical treatment is available. First aid does not replace the need for professional medical treatment.

Triple Zero (000) is Australia's primary emergency call service number and should be used to call for emergency assistance.

Commander and managers of youth engagement activities should ensure that:

- supervisors maintain currency in first aid training, including anaphylactic first aid
- there is provision of sufficient and accessible first aid equipment for each activity
- there is provision of Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for higher risk activities or higher risk environments (for example, remote locations)

Ambulance. In the event that an ambulance is required, the youth engagement agreement/supporting documentation should specify who is responsible for payment of the costs. The arrangements in place may vary depending on the youth engagement program/activity.



Defence medical facilities and professionals. The primary purpose of Defence medical facilities is the provision of medical services to ADF members. The first point of call for medical treatment for Defence youth activity participants is a non-Defence medical facility. However, in dire circumstances Defence medical facilities may provide emergency treatment to participants of Defence youth activities, until civilian emergency services arrive.

Reporting

All medical incidents occurring during youth engagement activities must be reported in accordance with the Defence Youth Manual.

Further assistance

For further information and assistance contact defence.youth@defence.gov.au



Enclosure 1

Defence Youth Engagement Activity Health Clearance Form

Dear

We would like to advise you to seek medical advice based of the information provided in your application for participation in a Defence Youth Engagement program or activity. This clearance is in accordance with the requirements under the Work Medical Safety Act 2011. Defence personnel must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and ensure that their actions or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others. Maximising the inclusivity requires an approach that balances an understanding of individual medical needs with WHS responsibilities.

Before continuing with your application/participation please ask your Doctor or Allied Medical Practitioner (Physiotherapist, Dietician, Exercise Physiologist etc) to complete this form or provide a health clearance on clinic letterhead and return the form to us at your earliest opportunity.

Defence youth engagement activities may consist of adventurous activities such as _____

(hiking, sailing, canoeing, basic survival skill, field craft, abseiling, flying, gliding and orienteering).

In order to provide best practice approach to participants, if your Doctor or Allied Medical Practitioner requires further information he/she can contact me on (insert relevant POC details): _____

The following information is to be completed by a Medical Doctor or Allied Medical Practitioner (Clinic letterhead required):

I.....(Dr/AHP Name)

have examined.....(participants name)

and find this person **FIT / UNFIT** (please indicate) to participate in _____ provided that the following guidelines are adhered to (Please list any restrictions/adjustments that should apply to the activities):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signature of Examiner.....

Clinic Address.....

Phone.....Fax..... Provider Number.....

Date of Examination.....