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**Question:** Is our school legally required to have an RN accompany students diagnosed with anaphylaxis (who may require an EpiPen) on field trips? Is administration of an EpiPen considered a delegated task, or one that a reasonable, prudent non-health care professional can do in an emergency? Please address the issue of nurses attending field trips in general.

**Answer:** This concern is definitely relevant to school nursing practice, given that an estimated 12.8% of U.S. children experienced a special health care need during 2001 (van Dyck, Kogan, McPherson, Weissman, & Newacheck, 2004). If a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan states that a nurse must carry out certain routine procedures and those procedures will be needed during the field trip, then the school has to make arrangements for a nurse to accompany the student or meet the student at some point during the field trip. If there is no stipulation in this regard or if the student does not have an IEP, then there is no requirement for the nurse to accompany the student on the field trip. This approach does not account for emergent situations that could occur during a field trip, however. **Furthermore, if your state has requirements for school nurses, then these requirements would also extend to any part of the normal school-day program, including field trips.**

Generally speaking, the administration of EpiPens is a procedure that adequately trained school personnel can carry out, or one that the student can even self-administer, as long as parents, the child's physician, the chief administrator, and the school nurse have agreed on and planned for this. It is important for school nurses to be familiar with the delegation rules in their states, because these vary among states. Many have statutes in the education code or rules in the state nursing practice act that allow for school staff members to assist with medications in certain situa-

tions. Although sometimes the rules for injectable medication are different from other dosage routes, it is also prudent for school nurses to be familiar with "Good Samaritan" laws in their state. Often, such laws contain guidance statements specific to emergency situations. State nursing practice acts are also a source of guidance. For example, the following is found in section 224.6(4) of the Texas Nursing Practice Rules and Regulations and pertains to emergency situations: "the nursing task must not require the unlicensed person to exercise professional nursing judgment; **however, the unlicensed person may take any action that a reasonable, prudent non-health care professional would take in an emergency situation.**"

For additional information about your state's practice requirements, rules, or other pertinent laws and regulations, please contact your state's school nurse consultant. Of the 50 states, 40 have a state school nurse consultant employed at either the state department of education or the state department of health. Some states have a school nurse consultant at both agencies. To locate the school nurse consultant for your state, visit <http://lserver.aea14.k12.ia.us/swp/tadkins/nassnc/NASSNC.html> and go to the membership section. The state board for nursing licensure in your state should be able to assist you as well.

### Reference

Van Dyck, P., Kogan, M., McPherson, M., Weissman, G., & Newacheck, P. (2004). Prevalence and characteristics of children with special health care needs. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 158, 884-890.

*Do you have a question for the consultants? If so, visit the NASSNC Web site <http://lserver.aea14.k12.ia.us/swp/tadkins/nassnc/nassnc.html> and click on "e-mail NASSNC" at the bottom of the home page.*