

## Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre's Anaphylaxis Policy

### **Introduction:**

We have a duty of care to those that come onto our site to respond adequately to any emergency that arises. Allergies pose a serious risk to life in some cases, and Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre is committed to being prepared to deal with an allergy related emergency on site, and to being proactive in prevention of allergic reactions wherever possible. Anaphylaxis is relatively common, and therefore it is important that we are prepared for clients that suffer from severe allergies that can lead to anaphylaxis.

### **Scope:**

Staff and clients need to be aware that it is not possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any service that is open to the general community. Staff and guests should not have a false sense of security that an allergen has been eliminated from the environment. Instead Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre recognises the need to adopt a range of procedures and risk minimisation strategies to reduce the risk of a guest having an anaphylactic reaction, including strategies to minimise the presence of the allergen on our site.

### **What is Anaphylaxis?**

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction. It can occur when a susceptible person is exposed to an allergen (such as a food or an insect sting). Reactions usually begin within minutes of exposure and can progress rapidly over a period of up to two hours or more. Anaphylaxis is potentially life threatening and always requires an emergency response.

### **Purpose:**

The aim of this policy is to:

- minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring while the guest is on site at Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre
- ensure that staff members respond appropriately to an anaphylactic reaction by initiating appropriate treatment, including competently administering an EpiPen<sup>®</sup>.
- raise awareness of anaphylaxis and its management amongst staff through education and policy implementation.

### **Methods:**

#### **Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre shall:**

- conduct an assessment of the potential for accidental exposure to allergens while child/ren at risk of anaphylaxis are on site and develop a risk minimisation plan for the centre in consultation with staff.
- ensure staff responsible for people at risk of anaphylaxis attend anaphylaxis management training, that is reinforced at yearly intervals. Preferably this will be covered in external first aid courses.
- ensure that all casual staff that are expected to have contact with clients on site unsupervised are aware of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction, any specific people at risk of anaphylaxis, their allergies, anaphylaxis action plan and location of their EpiPen<sup>®</sup> kit.
- Advise groups that any persons with a diagnosed allergy that may lead to anaphylaxis must provide their own EpiPen<sup>®</sup> or equivalent injection device. **Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre do not have EpiPens<sup>®</sup> on site.**
- Recommend to groups booking the Conference Centre that due to the distance from Professional Medical care and the size of the property, it would be beneficial to carry two EpiPens<sup>®</sup> to be prepared for "rebound reactions".
- Make groups aware that responsibility cannot be taken for any person who has been prescribed an EpiPen<sup>®</sup> but who is not carrying that EpiPen<sup>®</sup>.
- Provide access to this policy on our website and to groups on request.
- display an ASCIA generic poster called *Action plan for Anaphylaxis* in key location at the Conference Centre, for example, the staff room, office, and with fixed first aid kits.
- display an ambulance contact card by telephones.

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- practice EpiPen<sup>®</sup> administration procedures using an EpiPen<sup>®</sup> trainer and “anaphylaxis scenarios” on a regular basis, at least bi-annually.

**External groups responsible for someone at risk of anaphylaxis (eg schools, church groups) shall:**

- ensure a copy of the persons anaphylaxis action plan is available to all staff/leaders.
- ensure a copy of the persons anaphylaxis action plan is provided to the Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre coordinator prior to their arrival.
- assist staff of the Conference Centre by offering information and answering any reasonable questions regarding the risk of anaphylaxis that will allow the Conference Centre to minimize the risk of an allergy related emergency.
- follow the persons anaphylaxis action plan in the event of an allergic reaction, which may progress to anaphylaxis.
- in the situation where a person who has not been diagnosed as allergic, but who appears to be having an anaphylactic reaction:
  - Call an ambulance immediately by dialing 000.
  - Commence first aid measures.
  - Contact the parent/guardian/emergency contact.
- have and demonstrate an adequate understanding of Anaphylaxis and Allergies to be able to undertake their duty of care.
- manage the person at risk of an anaphylactic reaction. In the case of a child, this may include, but isn't limited to, ensuring that the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> kit is stored in a location that is known to all staff/leaders, easily accessible to adults (ie not locked away); inaccessible to children; and away from direct sources of heat, that the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> is not out of date, and that the EpiPen<sup>®</sup> is taken to each activity that the child is undertaking.

**Prevention guidelines:**

***In relation to a person at risk:***

- This person should only eat food that has been specifically prepared for him/her or where they are advised that all food at a particular meal is safe for them to consume.
- Where the Conference Centre is preparing food for the child, they shall ensure that it has been prepared according to any specific instructions.
- Some parents will choose to provide all food for their child and this shall be accommodated wherever possible.
- All food for this child should be checked and be in accordance with the risk minimisation plan.
- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes, including any treats, should be clearly labeled with the name of the person at risk.
- There should be no trading or sharing of food, food utensils and containers with this person.
- In some circumstances it may be appropriate that a highly allergic person does not sit at the same table when others consume food or drink containing or potentially containing the allergen. However, children with allergies should not be separated from all children and should be socially included in all activities.
- Where this child is very young, provide his/her own high chair to minimise the risk of cross-contamination.
- When an at risk infant is allergic to milk, ensure non-allergic infants are held when they drink formula/milk.

***In relation to other practices at the centre:***

- Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre has a nut minimization strategy. This means that we will not have foods on site that CONTAIN nuts (does not including sesame seeds). We will still have foods on site that state on their ingredients that they “MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF NUTS” or “PRODUCED ON MACHINERY THAT ALSO PROCESSES NUTS” or similar. For people at risk of a severe anaphylactic reaction to nuts or any other food product, they are welcome to provide all of their own food. If notice of this is given, a microwave will be sterilized and labeled prior to their arrival and available for the duration of their stay to reheat food.

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- Other allergens have not been removed from the site but will be assessed and monitored as part of our allergen risk assessment. Notice of this is given to groups prior to their arrival in their information pack.
- The daily routine includes the tables and bench tops being wiped down after eating.
- We will encourage hand washing for all guests before and after eating.
- We will restrict use of food and food containers, boxes and packaging in crafts, cooking and science experiments, depending on the allergies of particular people. Staff should discuss the use of foods in such activities with coordinators of groups and these foods should be consistent with the risk minimisation plan.
- Infants need to be closely supervised at meal and snack times and consume food in specified areas. To minimise risk no one should 'wander around' the centre with food. This needs to be monitored by group staff/leaders
- Staff will use non-food rewards, for example stickers, for all children.
- The risk minimisation plan will be taken into account for food purchases and menu planning.
- Food preparation personnel (staff and volunteers) will be instructed about measures necessary to prevent cross contamination between foods during the handling, preparation and serving of food – such as careful cleaning of food preparation areas and utensils.

#### **Communication**

1. Our policy will be discussed during induction sessions for all new staff and volunteers.
2. A copy of this policy will be available in the Conference Centres office, and will be on display in that office.
3. A copy of this policy will be available on our website and a condensed "Anaphylaxis information sheet" will be sent to all groups who indicate that they have someone attending with a severe allergy.

#### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every July and we welcome comments and suggestions relating to our Anaphylaxis Policy at any time.

#### **Credits:**

Parts of this policy are taken from "Anaphylaxis Model Policy" – Victorian Government Department of Human Services © 2006, reproduced with permission

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