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## INSULIN ADMINISTRATION IN SCHOOLS

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The Tennessee General Assembly recently amended Tenn. Code Ann. §49-5-215, which now allows school staff to administer daily insulin and glucagon in emergency situations. Only school personnel who have been properly trained may administer the insulin or glucagon, and no personnel can be forced to take the training. This is entirely a volunteer-based initiative.

The training can only be performed by a registered nurse employed or contracted by the school system. All school nurses must be educated in diabetes care and must have knowledge of the guidelines as set forth in the most recent "Use of Health Care Professionals and Health Procedures in a School Setting." Training must be consistent with these guidelines. However, a school nurse may use certified diabetes educators and licensed nutritionists to assist in training.

This training must be repeated annually and competencies must be documented at least twice a year in the employee's personnel file. A nurse may train as many school personnel as volunteer but should attempt to ensure at least two volunteers are available. A nurse cannot be pressured to qualify any volunteer unless that volunteer is properly trained and has been deemed by the nurse to be competent.

Once trained, a school staff member may then: 1) administer daily insulin to a student based upon that student's individual health plan; and 2) administer glucagon in emergency situations. However, if the school nurse is on site and available, the nurse shall provide these services to the student. The public school nurse employed or contracted by the school system is responsible for updating and maintaining each individual health plan.

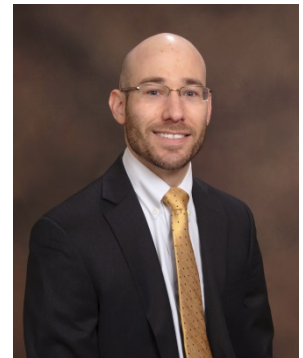
In an effort to reduce the number of syringes in school, the nurse may encourage the use of an insulin pen, but only if the use of an insulin pen has been deemed medically appropriate by that specific student's treating physician.

### WRITTEN PERMISSION IS REQUIRED

**A student's parent or guardian must first give written permission before a school's trained volunteer or school nurse can participate in the care of the student with diabetes. This written permission must be kept in the student's school records.**



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A local board of education that authorizes school personnel to assist with the care of students with diabetes shall not be held liable in any court of law for injury resulting from the reasonable assistance with the care of students with diabetes if performed pursuant to the guidelines developed by the departments of health and education.

The nurse who trains the volunteers shall not be held liable in any court of law shall not be held liable in any court of law for injury resulting from the reasonable assistance with the care of students with diabetes if performed pursuant to the guidelines developed by the departments of health and education. Nor shall that nurse be subject to any disciplinary or other adverse licensing action by the Board of Nursing for injury resulting from assistance with the care of students with diabetes if performed pursuant to guidelines set forth in the “Use of Health Care Professionals and Health Procedures in a School Setting.”

A volunteer who has been properly trained by a registered nurse employed or contracted by the school system shall not be held liable in any court of law shall not be held liable in any court of law for injury resulting from the reasonable assistance with the care of students with diabetes if performed pursuant to the guidelines developed by the departments of health and education.

*Clifton N. Miller and Richard A. Marrero is available to consult with school system and other governmental entities regarding these and related matters.*

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