Basic Health and Safety Training Topic 5: ALLERGIES

**Slide 2** - In this section we will discuss:

- Allergy Action Plans
- Asthma Action Plans
- Signs and Symptoms
- Calling 9-1-1
- Parent Notification and

**Slide 3** - An allergy action plan is a written plan that is developed with a doctor to help control or prevent asthma or allergy emergencies. The action plan shows any daily treatments, such as what kind of medicines to take and when to take them. The plan also describes how to control long term asthma and allergies AND how to handle worsening asthma, asthma attacks or allergy emergencies. The plan explains when to call the doctor or go to the emergency room.

If a child has asthma or allergies, all of the people who care for that child should know about the child's action plan. It is important to follow the action plan.

The links to both the Allergy Action Plan and the Asthma Action Plan used by child care providers in Maryland can be found on your screen and on our website.

There are many children in child care facilities with a diagnosis of asthma or have serious reactions to allergens, and may need emergency medical attention. Allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) are an immune system hypersensitivity to a particular substance called an allergen. For many allergic individuals, exposure to an allergen results in mild symptoms. However, for some, allergic reactions can be severe and result in potentially life-threatening medical conditions. The most dangerous symptoms include breathing difficulty and a drop in blood pressure or shock, both of which are potentially fatal.

Anaphylaxis refers to this type of severe allergic reaction. Anaphylaxis may affect children with both known allergies and those without known allergies.

Asthma is a chronic lung disease that lasts for long periods of time and involves ongoing management of the disease. Asthma may require periodic treatment to lessen the severity of inflammation and irritation to the lungs and affects the child’s ability to breathe effectively. The level of severity of the disease and adherence to prescribed medication prior to and in response to symptoms can prevent life threatening breathing difficulties.

For more information on Asthma and Allergies, please visit the link on your screen. It is recommended that you read this resource guide after completion of this training.

**Slide 4** - Anaphylaxis is sudden, severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that affects multiple organ systems of the body. Anaphylaxis requires immediate medical attention and can be fatal if not reversed within seconds or minutes of coming into contact with the allergen. Allergens such as insect stings or bites, foods, latex, medications and other allergens are common causes of anaphylaxis.

Symptoms of anaphylaxis usually involve more than one part of the body such as the skin, mouth, eyes, lungs, heart, gut, and brain. Some symptoms include:

- Skin rashes and itching and hives
• Swelling of the lips, tongue or throat
• Shortness of breath, trouble breathing, wheezing (whistling sound during breathing)
• Dizziness and/or fainting
• Stomach pain, vomiting or diarrhea
• Feeling like something awful is about to happen

Symptoms progress rapidly making it a medical emergency. An Anaphylactic reaction can include but is not limited to difficulty breathing. Call 911 immediately. If the child has been prescribed epinephrine for allergic reactions, administer the medications according to the directions. You must be trained in Medication Administration however you may be able to assist by holding the child’s leg during administration of epinephrine.

Slide 5 - It should be a policy that children do not share food or trade food with one another to avoid possible allergic reactions that may occur. Staff needs to be especially cautious on field trips or other events when children are bringing foods from home. Prepared foods must not come into contact with any allergen and all food must be prepared on clean sanitized surfaces. It is important to recognize symptoms of allergic reactions and if possible, avoid serving food in programs that are known allergens for children in care. If you are preparing food for children in care, it is important to carefully read all food labels and when using food service vendors, making them aware of any food allergies in your program.

Slide 6 - If you have to administer Epinephrine you must call 911. If a child is exhibiting any signs or symptoms of an allergic reaction and they do not have an Epinephrine prescribed, call 9-1-1 immediately and then contact the parents or guardian.

• Staff must ensure that the Asthma Action Plan or Allergy Action Plan is current and not dated more than one year prior to delivery of care.
• Staff must frequently review and monitor records to ensure the care plan remains consistent with the licensed health care provider’s authorized plan of care;
• Staff must ensure that all medications have a current expiration date or is returned to the parent (or discarded) as indicated by the date on the medication;
• Staff must ensure that assigned staff receiving and reviewing the care plan, signs the medication authorization form verifying the receipt of and an understanding of the care plan’s contents; and
• Staff must ensure that the child care staff person documents in the record each instance of the administration of medication to a child on the Medication Administration Authorization Form. Staff should always document the date, time and reason the medication was administered.

A list of all known allergies must be not only in the child’s record but must be reflected on the child’s emergency form, health inventory and any additional medical forms or licensing forms such as the allergy action plan.

Emergency forms must be complete and updated a minimum of annually. Emergency forms must be easily accessible at all times and must be carried to outdoor play areas and on field trips.