

Family Role in Transition Planning for a Student on an NSS Delegated Care Plan

Welcome to Nursing Support Services (NSS). We are excited to be working with you. The overall goal of NSS in the school setting is to facilitate and support a student to reach interdependence with managing their diabetes care to the extent that is safe and appropriate for their functional and cognitive ability, maturity and experience with their diabetes diagnosis.¹

Interdependence

NSS works towards a child's interdependence – facilitating an increased ability or independent decision-making and self-care, but not with the goal of independent functioning as adult involvement remains key. NSS's goal is to build your child's ability to manage their T1D care autonomously within an appropriate system of support and safety net at school – the Diabetes Support Plan (DSP) and Medical Alert. Once your child is independently able to make decisions regarding their T1D needs and do all the tasks required for their own care, there would still be adult support and intervention as per the Plan (DSP) you have in place at school.

Goals towards interdependence are developed in consultation with everyone supporting your child to be successful at school - yourselves as parents/guardians, the NSS Coordinator, school personnel, and your child as appropriate. If needed, your child's diabetes team can be consulted.

Safety

Safety is number one! In the context of the school, the following are baseline safety measures as school staff are not required nor permitted to carry equipment. Your child needs to:

- carry their own fast-acting carbohydrates
- carry their own CGM/FGM receiver/wand if they are using this technology for glucose monitoring at school
- cooperate with school staff providing finger-poke or complete a BG finger-poke check as per care plan
- be encouraged to tell an adult/responsible friend if they are feeling signs of symptoms of low or high sugars
- be encouraged to tell an adult/responsible friend if they have a CGM alert/alarm

These are the first independent tasks your child will need upon admission to NSS in order to ensure their foundational safety needs in the school setting.

Step One – The Diabetes Transition Checklist

The Diabetes Transition Checklist enables your NSS Coordinator to assess, monitor and evaluate yearly your child's progress on their T1D journey. This guide will ultimately assist your NSS Coordinator in determining when your child is performing the key T1D care tasks consistently and accurately. The T1D tasks are: (1) blood glucose testing/monitoring, (2) including carbs into mealtime care, (3) insulin administration, (4) eating on time as per activity and meal schedule, and (5) acting based on blood glucose result. Your NSS Coordinator will:

- Begin the checklist upon admission into NSS
- Confirm with you what your child is able to do and document it at the start of the school year
- Monitor your child's progress through the school year, documenting a check mid-year (November – March) and then one towards the end of the year (April – June)
- Confirm with you and the school your child's readiness to start transitioning off the delegated care plan one check at a time

¹ NSS (2020). Nursing Support Services Delegated Type 1 Diabetes Care in the School Setting: Standard. Vancouver, B.C.; Author.

Collaboration

Supporting a child to integrate the skills they are learning at home with continued practice in school helps a child integrate their learning and feel more successful. Children want to be independent (to be more like their peers), but diabetes is a 24/7 job and all children/youth require the support of friends and family to successfully transition to full interdependence. We encourage you as parents to let your NSS Coordinator know what skills you are working on at home so integration can occur at school. We recognize and appreciate that as parent(s) you will be assessing your own child's readiness, developmentally and emotionally, to be transitioning off the NSS T1D delegated care plan. Every child is unique. However, as needed, your NSS Coordinator is able to provide you with guidance based upon their knowledge of integrating developmentally appropriate care and its impact on children and families who live with T1D. In the end, the burden of care is real and needs to be recognized. It will be a balance of encouraging your child to become more independent at school and feeling safe and supported/ helped both in school and in your home.

When diabetes care tasks, as per the Diabetes Transition Checklist (yellow and green zones), are performed by your child consistently and accurately, school staff will have moved from providing care directly to your child to providing more guidance and observation. After a period of about 3 to 6 months (age dependent) of school staff observation/guidance, your NSS Coordinator will initiate transition planning.

Step Two – Transition Planning

Typically, a transition plan is established between Nov – March with the goal of removing one routine scheduled at a time until your child has been signed off their entire delegated care plan by the end of the same school year. The NSS Coordinator identifies a routine check, one that does not involve insulin administration such as start of school or physical activity, as the starting point and communicates the start date to everyone. The signs and symptoms care plan check remains in place until the very end, as it is most closely mirrors the safety plan in the DSP.

The NSS Coordinator will work with you, your child and the school to set up a student self-check tool² (or you/your child may choose to use the existing delegated care plan) to guide all the steps involved in each scheduled check. This reminder checklist will guide your child's success in completing all the necessary steps in each regularly scheduled check³. The key steps that your child needs to be able to demonstrate for each routine check are as follows:

- Remembering to do the scheduled check.
- Washing hands and preparing own equipment and putting things away.
- Observing CGM number and arrow(s) (or performing BG if CGM not working).
- Determining what action to take based on the number and arrow(s). The NSS delegated care plan will be available for them to look at as needed.
- Performing the appropriate action.
- Documenting on the Diabetes Care Record.

During active transitioning, your NSS Coordinator assigns routine scheduled checks for transition and your child will lead versus the school staff. In turn, school staff will provide your child transition support by:

- Giving your child a chance to self-initiate their *routine care* check.
- Asking your child as they are leaving to go out for *routine care* play, if they remembered to check.
- If student affirms their care was done, school staff checks the student's self-check tool / documentation to ensure the care plan was followed.
- School staff keep track of the student's progress daily.

² See Appendix C

³ In an NSS delegated care plan, scheduled checks are available at: signs and symptoms/alert/alarms, start of school, recess, lunch, two hours after lunch, and before activity (planned and unplanned)

- Ensuring daily completion of the Diabetes Care Documentation Record, according to the care provided in the school setting (student and/or staff).
- If your child did not complete task according to plan, they will be reminded and supported to go back and complete. School staff will document comments on the Diabetes Care Documentation Record in the notes section.

It is the NSS Coordinator's role to determine when your child is ready to be signed-off from a particular routine check in the delegated care plan. They formally sign-off this decision on the NSS Diabetes Transition Sign-off Tool and communicates it to the school staff and parents. This means then, that the routine check is no longer part of your child's delegated care plan and that page(s) is no longer under the act of delegation with school staff no longer providing observation/guidance. If your child might have a question or need support following this, they would be connecting with you for help.

During active transition process, T1D support continues to be in alignment with NSS delegation and Tri-ministry expectations, regardless of whom is providing that care (i.e. student, family or school staff), until your child has been discharged off their NSS delegated care plan completely, as your child gradually assumes responsibility (or masters) in their care.

Celebrating Achievement

Celebrating achievements is so important! Praise your child's achievements and give positive feedback and support in areas of developing capability. Listen to your child/youth's input and slowly give them control based on what they can manage, but stand firm on those areas that are non-negotiable. Your NSS Coordinator will also help you and your child reflect upon progress about every 3-4 months using the NSS Diabetes Transition Checklist and provide any feedback and guidance as necessary.

Studies show that not including and involving children in their care not only risks ongoing dependence but also can lead to potential complications and negative outcomes into adolescence and beyond. NSS looks forward to the collaborative effort! Your involvement in your child's diabetes management together with the shared responsibility of that care with your child, will lead to better metabolic control and better adolescent psychological health and self-care behaviour – a celebration indeed!