Medication Disposal Algorithm

The following procedure sample was created as part of the Developing a School Health Services Assessment Tool and Related Resources Project. This project is funded by Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program, a component of the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

The Medication Disposal Algorithm has incorporated state and federal requirements along with best practice recommendations. Although it would be best practice to implement all the components of the procedure in your school district, we are aware that district capacity, resources and other factors may result in adoption of portions of the sample procedure.

We encourage you to meet as a team within your district to review the procedure and identify what components of the procedure you are currently doing in your district. If you have the capacity to expand upon what you are currently doing, review the sample procedure to identify what other practices you would be able to implement.
Can the medication be mailed home to parent/guardian?
- Do you have consent from the parent/guardian to mail medication?
- Is there a valid home address?
- Is mailing the medications home a safe option?

Yes

Mail medication to home address
- Document return of medication on medication administration form
- If medication is a controlled substance, have 2 staff document return of medication

No

Is medication a controlled substance?¹
- Contact local police department for directions on appropriate disposal

Yes

Have police officer pick up medications.
- Have accepting police offer and staff members document disposal on medication administration form

No

Will the local police department accept the medication?
- Yes or Unsure

Yes

Have waste disposal employee and school staff member document disposal on medication administration form

No

Does school have a contract with a waste disposal company that has DEA authorization to accept it?
- Yes

Have 2 staff members witness the disposal of medication by flushing medication down the toilet.
- Staff members should document disposal on medication administration form²

No

Has the disposal of medication by flushing medication down the toilet been verified by law enforcement?
- Yes

Have 2 staff members witness the disposal of medication by flushing medication down the toilet.
- Staff members should document disposal on medication administration form²

No

Is this medication a hazardous waste under state law?³
- Yes or Unsure

Yes

Contact state hazardous waste vendor or hire another hazardous waste contractor for disposal⁴
- Document disposal on medication administration form

No

Is medication an infectious waste?⁵
- Yes

Option 1: Contact state infectious waste vendor or hire another infectious waste contractor for disposal⁶
- Document disposal on medication administration form

No

Preferred option: Discard the waste through incineration at a licensed incinerator
- Contact state hazardous waste vendor or hire another hazardous waste contractor for disposal⁶
- Document disposal on medication administration form

Option 2: Dispose at registered sharps collection stations⁷
- Document disposal on medication administration form

Option 2: Throw in garbage
- Document disposal on medication administration form

1. Medication is a controlled substance.
2. Staff members should document disposal on medication administration form.
3. This medication is a hazardous waste under state law.
4. Has the disposal of medication by flushing medication down the toilet been verified by law enforcement?
5. Is medication an infectious waste?
6. Preferred option: Discard the waste through incineration at a licensed incinerator
7. Option 2: Dispose at registered sharps collection stations.
1. **Controlled substances:**
Here are a few medications likely to be found in schools and known to be controlled substances (this list is not all inclusive):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medication</th>
<th>Equivalent Medication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adderall®</td>
<td>Dextroamphetamine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alprazolam</td>
<td>Dextrostat®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anexia®</td>
<td>Diazepam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anodynos-DHC®</td>
<td>Dilaudid®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astramorph®</td>
<td>Endocet®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ativan®</td>
<td>Focalin®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benzodiazepine</td>
<td>Hydrocodone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clonazepam</td>
<td>Hydromorphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Klonopin®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerta®</td>
<td>Lisdexamfetamine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cortef</td>
<td>Lorazepam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darvocet-N®</td>
<td>Lorcan®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darvon®</td>
<td>Lortab®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darvon-N®</td>
<td>Lyrica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daytrana®</td>
<td>Metadate®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dextedrine®</td>
<td>Methylphenidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dexamfetamine</td>
<td>Modafinil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dextroamphetamine</td>
<td>Norco®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dextrostat®</td>
<td>Oramorph SR®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dextramorph®</td>
<td>Oxycodone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dextrostat®</td>
<td>OxyContin®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diazepam</td>
<td>OxyFAST®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clonazepam</td>
<td>OxyIR®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clonazepam</td>
<td>Percocet®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Pentobarbital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Pregabalin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Propoxyphene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Provacil®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Ritalin®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Ritalina®</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ritaline®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Roxanol®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Roxanol-SR®</td>
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<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Roxicodone®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Roxitox®</td>
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<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Serax®</td>
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<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Statex®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Tylenol® with Codeine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Tranxene®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Vicodin®</td>
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<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Vynase®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Xanace®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Zydone®</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Although flushing controlled substances down the toilet is currently legal, it is not considered best practice.

3. **Hazardous medications:** It is up to you to determine that each medication is not a hazardous waste and document your decision and the source of information. If you are not sure or do not have time to document it, you should assume that the medication is a hazardous waste. To help you with your decisions, here are a few medications likely to be found in schools and known to be hazardous waste when discarded (this list is not all inclusive):

- Ammonia, aromatic Inhalant
- chemotherapy drugs
- Coumadin
- Dilantin
- Erythromycin topical gel 2%
- Flagyl
- Insulin
- Lomotil
- pressurized aerosol inhalers (such as albuterol)
- rubbing alcohol
- Silver sulfadiazine cream
- vaccines containing mercury

4. School districts may choose to consolidate hazardous waste with other school districts within a county and dispose of the waste using the state hazardous waste vendor [http://vendornet.state.wi.us/vendornet/default.asp](http://vendornet.state.wi.us/vendornet/default.asp) or hire another hazardous waste contractor for disposal. To find a hazardous waste contractor go to [http://dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search for the topic “pharmaceutical waste”. (Check with school engineer for more information on disposing of hazardous waste).

5. **Infectious Waste**
- Epipen®:
i. If unable to return an unexpired epinephrine syringe (Epipen®), a school may keep the Epipen® for use in a life-threatening emergency. Upon expiration, the Epipen® is an infectious waste.

- used or sterile syringes
- used or sterile lancets

6. School districts may choose to consolidate infectious waste with other school districts within a county and dispose of the waste using the state infectious waste vendor [http://vendornet.state.wi.us/vendornet/default.asp](http://vendornet.state.wi.us/vendornet/default.asp) or hire another infectious waste contractor for disposal. Go to [http://dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search for the topic “health care waste”. Under the heading for non-households, choose “infectious waste.” (Check with school engineer for more information on disposing of infectious waste).

7. School districts can take sharps to a healthcare provider, which accepts sharps from the public, or to a registered sharps collection station. To find a site that collects sharps look on [http://dnr.wi.gov/](http://dnr.wi.gov/), search for “Healthcare waste,” and click on the link about sharps collection.

8. **Common Non-Hazardous Medications:**

- Abilify
- Acetaminophen
- Benadryl
- Carbamazepine
- Clonidine
- Depakote
- Dextromethorphan HBr, USP
- Dulcolax
- Felbamate
- Glucagon
- Guaifenesin
- Ibuprofen
- Imitrex
- Lactaid
- Miralax
- Naproxen
- Pepto-Bismol
- Phenylephrine HCl, USP
- Risperdal
- Seroquel
- Singular
- Strattera
- Tums
- Wellbutrin
- Zoloft
- Zyrtec

**References:**


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