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Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISEBE IeMfundo IeNtshona Koloni

CIRCULAR : 0014/2006

EXPIRY DATE : NONE

TO: CHIEF DIRECTORS, DIRECTORS AND HEADS OF SECTIONS (HEAD OFFICE AND EMDCs), AND HEADS OF ALL WCED INSTITUTIONS (INCLUDING SPECIAL SCHOOLS)

BRIEF SUMMARY: *To provide school management teams with guidelines for the appropriate management of six communicable diseases prevalent at schools including meningitis, chicken pox, head lice, measles, scabies and mumps.*

SUBJECT: DISEASES MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS

1. In collaboration with the provincial Reference Group on Youth and Adolescent Health chaired by the Department of Health, Sub-directorate Maternal Child and Womens' Health, the first set of management guidelines for six common communicable diseases has been written for schools. Please find attached.
2. The following critical points should be noted:
 - In the event of meningitis, learners should be excluded from school immediately and should only return to school on approval by the learners' doctor once treatment has started. Bacterial meningitis (meningococcal meningitis) is a notifiable disease and therefore, the local and provincial Departments of Health should be informed immediately.
 - In the event of chicken pox (varicella virus), learners should be excluded from school while treatment is ongoing, and can return to school with permission from the doctor.
 - In the event of head lice, learners should only be excluded from school until treatment with a special shampoo available from a pharmacy/chemist has started, and thereafter can return to school (even if nits are still present). Treatment with home shampoos will not be effective. A sample letter for parents is attached. Should a number of learners at school be infected, it is recommended that schools inform the parent body, and advise that their children are checked regularly (sample letter attached).
 - In the event of measles, learners should be excluded from school for 7 days following the appearance of a blotchy red rash all over the body.
 - In the event of scabies, learners should be excluded from school until 24 hours after treatment has started. Scabies cannot be self-diagnosed or treated, therefore if the school suspects a scabies infection, the learner should be referred to the nearest health clinic or doctor/nurse.
 - In the event of mumps, the learner should be excluded from school for 7 – 9 days after the appearance of swelling of the salivary glands, and should only return to school with letter of approval from the doctor.
3. It is recommended that all schools encourage applicants to the school to have their children fully immunised before beginning school so as to minimise the risk of contracting communicable diseases such as measles, chicken pox and mumps. Not all public health clinics provide this service, but most pharmacies/chemists/private clinics should be able to

offer these immunisations. In addition, it is recommended that should pre-school cards or Road to Health cards be available, that schools include these as part of the learner records.

4. This notice and the [attached guidelines](#) must be brought to the attention of all educators and school management team members.

SIGNED: R.B. SWARTZ

HEAD: EDUCATION

DATE: 2006:02:13

Grand Central Towers, Lower Parliament Street, Private Bag X9114, Cape Town 8000

Please quote reference numbers in all correspondence

SAFE SCHOOLS: 0800 45 46 47

CLIENT CALL CENTRE: 0861 92 33 22

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