



Kids in School with Diabetes

Issue: The Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) is urging the Government to introduce a policy addressing the needs of students with diabetes immediately and commit to ensuring the policy is fully implemented by the start of the 2017/18 school year.

In Ontario, 1 in 300 students has diabetes.

- A supportive school environment is critical to keeping students with diabetes safe and healthy. Proper diabetes management reduces the risk of life-threatening emergencies, prevents or reduces the risk of serious long-term complications, and ensures that students with diabetes are able to learn and participate fully in all school activities.
- Most children with type 1 diabetes are diagnosed at a young age, and the only treatment is daily injections/infusions of insulin, combined with multiple daily blood sugar checks and a careful balance between insulin, food and activity.
- In Ontario, some schools and school boards have policies to address the needs of students with diabetes, while others have none – meaning supports vary widely from one school to the next. Even in places where school boards have a policy, the guidelines are often not comprehensive enough to adequately protect students with diabetes.
- As a result, students with diabetes are put at risk and many parents are left struggling to find adequate support for children who are unable to self-manage their diabetes (e.g. monitor blood sugar, administer insulin).

Ontario has fallen behind, with no province-wide diabetes policy to protect students.

- Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, British Columbia and Newfoundland & Labrador have province-wide policies or guidelines to support children with diabetes.
- For years, the CDA has called on the Province of Ontario to implement a policy that would protect the well-being of students with diabetes. In 2014, the CDA launched new *Guidelines for the Care of Students Living with Diabetes at School* to ensure consistent and equitable support for students with diabetes across all schools.
- In 2014, OPHEA released recommendations in a report for the *Management of and Response to Prevalent Student Medical Conditions in Publicly-funded Ontario Schools*.
- In June 2015, the Government convened the Prevalent Medical Conditions Committee – a group consisting of external stakeholders including the CDA – to provide advice on a policy that addresses the needs of students with diabetes, asthma, anaphylaxis and epilepsy.
 - To date, a full draft policy has not been presented to the Committee for feedback, despite a target date of fall 2016 with full implementation for the start of the 2017/18 school year.

It shouldn't matter where you go to school – but today in Ontario, it does.

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