

## Update on medical procedures consultation

On 26 September 2018 in our update to members about the Life Without Barriers (LWB) JCC we let you know about a consultative meeting that was going to occur regarding medical procedures, in particular administering medication via PEG. According to LWB it only has clients in respite that require this procedure.

CPSU NSW representatives, Jessica Moore and Shane Elliot attend this meeting with LWB management. Currently the medical procedures as developed by Family and Community Services in consultation with the union and medical professionals has that only nutrition should be administered by DSW through a PEG, not medication.

LWB would like to expand what you, as DSWs, are able to do, having you administer medications via the PEG. LWB does not believe that this would cause to great of a risk to the client if you are trained appropriately. In fact, LWB tried to use the argument that parents of clients undertake the procedure.

The ability for DSWs to be able to undertake these procedures safely has, unfortunately, been supported by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. In recent policy and regulations, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission has determined that staff with the appropriate training would be able to undertake this task or it could be undertaken by a trained medical professional.

In seeking to have the DSW's fulfil this task LWB have advised in the meeting that the training would be undertaken by a trained medical professional, there would be an assessment component and you would be required to pass and undertake the training every 12 months.

It was proposed by LWB that this was to be optional for staff as to whether or not they would like to do the procedure, therefore be trained in it. This option and the ramifications however need to be considered and we would need confirmation that opting out would not cause any detriment to staff.

In the meeting it was raised by the CPSU NSW:

- » whilst training is provided that there is still a level of risk as DSW's are not trained medical professionals and do not have the knowledge that comes with that.
- » what happens if staff fail the training or do not want to participate?

- » Staff could undertake the training but not have to do the procedure for three months and therefore they have not had a chance to reinforce the training, what will occur in these situations.
- » That a parent doing a medical procedure is not comparable to asking someone as part of their job to do it, there are different expectations and greater ramifications if something was to go wrong.
- » In making the procedure optional it could result in staff missing out on penalty shifts and causing friction in the workplace.
- » What assurances are that the training will be adequate.

LWB maintained its position that this procedure was not going to be a great risk if the proper training was provided. It felt there were assurances in place with oversight from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, it would be providing information as required by the Commission such as the amount of clients that required medications via PEG. It assured the CPSU NSW that the training would be provided by qualified medical professionals. The CPSU NSW will be provided the training package as requested to review and provide comment.

Further, in trying to alleviate concerns about staff not carrying out the procedure soon after training and losing the skills LWB made assurances that they would allow staff to seek further assistance after the training is completed. It would be considered whether or not they would have trained staff even come out to attend the first instance of staff undertaking the procedure on clients.

LWB will not be proceeding with having staff undertake this procedure until consultation has finalised. It will be providing the CPSU NSW with drafts of the procedures and training that will support DSWs in undertaking this procedure.

Currently the CPSU NSW still considers that this procedure should only be done by trained medical professionals.

We would like to know what you think! Email [disabilityCPSUNSW@psa.asn.au](mailto:disabilityCPSUNSW@psa.asn.au) or call **1300 772 679** and provide us with your concerns or feedback on DSWs providing medication to clients via a PEG.

