



What is a Care Plan?

Prepared by the Health & Safety Specialists at Child Care Aware® of North Dakota

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) enacted in 1990, requires reasonable accommodation to enable equal participation in services for individuals with a disability. This includes children with chronic special needs such as asthma, allergies, diabetes, and autism as well as those who have a temporary condition such as a broken arm.

Developing a care plan

Any child who has a chronic or temporary special health, behavioral or developmental need should have a written care plan. These plans are typically developed by a team of people who know and care for the child, including the child's parents, physician, therapist, etc.

A care plan should include:

- General information about the child such as name, date of birth, etc.
- Diagnosis, diagnoses, or description of any conditions or concerns
- Medication or procedure to be administered
- Contact information for family, physicians, therapists, etc.
- Allergies
- Special diet or feeding modifications or both
- Accommodation or modifications to enable participation in all aspects of the care, including daily routines such as napping, toileting, outdoor activity, transportation, etc.
- Special equipment or supplies
- Triggers to avoid
- Symptoms to watch for
- Behavioral modifications
- Suggested special skills training and education for provider/staff
- Modifications to the environment
- Information for emergency care such as procedures, contact information, etc.

Benefits of a care plan

Written care plans:

- Ensure a child's special needs are being met consistently.
- Prevent mistakes by having information/instructions in writing.
- Allow provider/staff to feel more comfortable when caring for children with special needs.

**** Licensing requires a care plan for any child who has a diagnosed condition. Licensing allows the care plan to be filled out and signed by the child's parent. It is recommended to have the care plan reviewed and signed by the child's physician or therapist. The care plan is required to be updated at least yearly.**

**** All staff should be made aware of any child(ren) with special needs in the program. Post a copy of the care plan in child's classroom with the child's picture to ensure proper identification. Child's picture/care plan should be covered by a brightly colored sheet of paper labeled with "children with special needs" so staff can easily find the information, but the child's identity is protected.**

**** All emergency medication/equipment specified in a care plan should be stored unlocked and out of the reach of children in a place easily identified by staff in case it is needed.**