

The National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12 years

Summary: Guidance to support Standard 11: Medication relating to the occasional administration of non-prescribed ~~liquid paracetamol~~ paracetamol oral suspension to unwell children.

Commented [A1]: Person A please can you confirm the correct terminology. Is it liquid paracetamol or paracetamol liquid? thanks

The Welsh Government have been notified by the Care Inspectorate for Wales (CIW) of issues and concerns relating to children's health and well-being within registered childcare and play settings. In particular these issues and concerns relate to the ~~specific provision~~ administration of **non-prescribed medication in the form of liquid paracetamol oral suspension ("liquid paracetamol")** by carers, to unwell~~to~~ children.

Children's health needs to be protected at all times and ~~therefore~~ where indicated, children should be able to receive prompt treatment for the relief of pain or high temperature whilst in registered childcare and play settings, in accordance with the licensed indications of paracetamol and subject to the consent of the child's parent/carer.

This guidance describes situations in which the administration of **paracetamol oral suspension ("liquid paracetamol")**~~liquid paracetamol~~¹ is considered acceptable and supplements the current Standard 11 for Medication in National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Regulated Childcare for children up to 12 years **published November 2023**. ~~This guidance, and~~ is effective immediately. The Standard relating to medication will be updated in line with a wider cyclical review and consultation on the NMS in due course.

The concerns and issues highlighted by CIW have led to calls for ~~clarity~~ clarification ~~regarding~~ what providers can and cannot do in relation to the administration of liquid paracetamol in accordance with **Standard 11: Medication**. ~~Particular Specific~~ clarification is required regarding whether ~~non-prescribed~~ liquid paracetamol ~~which has not been prescribed for a child~~, can be possessed and administered to children when appropriate safeguards are in place.

~~The Welsh Government recommends that registered providers can possess, store and administer liquid paracetamol in the limited circumstances described in this guidance.~~

Currently, the NMS allows for the provision of prescribed medication for relevant children but does not specifically refer to non-prescribed medication.

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¹ For the purposes of this guidance liquid paracetamol refers to individual 5mL sachets of paracetamol ~~sugar free oral~~ suspension each containing ~~250mg-120mg~~ of paracetamol per 5mL, only.

-This circular ~~letter therefore~~ provides ~~updating~~ updated guidance ~~to enabling~~ enable providers to possess, store and administer non-prescribed liquid paracetamol subject to the following conditions being met:

General conditions

- ~~The registered~~ The registered childcare or play setting has a medicine policy which describes the circumstances in which liquid paracetamol may be administered to a child who is attending the setting;
- The medicine policy has been shared with the parent/carer and must set out the arrangements and procedures in place to support the safe administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication, including when there is an urgent need whilst a child is being cared for at the registered setting, for example, in the event of a child having a high temperature; and
- The child's parents/carers have given permission for the provider to administer liquid paracetamol to the relevant child in the circumstances described in the medicines policy.

1. ~~— The policy must be shared with the parent/carer and must set out the arrangements and procedures in place to support the safe administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication, including when there is an emergency situation whilst relevant children are being cared for at the setting. E.g., in the event of a child having a high temperature.~~

~~The child's parents/carers have given permission for the provider to administer liquid paracetamol to the relevant child in the circumstances described in the medicines policy.~~ Conditions relating to each occasion liquid paracetamol is administered

In situations in which a child has become unwell whilst at the registered setting, it is most appropriate for the child to be collected by a parent or carer. However, in circumstances where:

- a) There may be a delay in the parent or carer collecting the child or arranging collection by someone else; or
- b) the parent or carer is not immediately contactable.

~~The following outlines the conditions under which a registered childcare or play setting is permitted to administer liquid paracetamol:~~

~~A child can become acutely ill (raised temperature or mild to moderate pain e.g. teething) whilst in a setting.~~

~~In these situations, it is most appropriate for the child to be collected by a parent or carer however:~~

~~it may take some time for the parent or carer to collect the child or arrange collection by someone else; or~~

~~the parent or carer may not be immediately contactable~~

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In these situations, it ~~would be~~ is appropriate for the child to be given a **single (age appropriate) dose of liquid paracetamol** until the child can be collected, subject to the following conditions being met:

1. the child's parent or carer has given prior consent to their child being given liquid paracetamol;

And

2. the child's parent or carer has been contacted;
3. the child's parent or carer has given consent for the dose of paracetamol to be given;
4. a period of at least 4 hours has passed since the last dose of paracetamol was given to the child; and
5. the parent or carer has undertaken to collect the child from the care provider as soon as is practicable.

Or

6. the care provider has attempted to contact the child's parent or carer, but they cannot be contacted;
7. the care provider has contacted NHS111;
8. a healthcare professional (at NHS111) has advised that it would be appropriate for a dose of liquid paracetamol to be given; and
9. the care provider subsequently contacts the child's parent or carer to arrange for the child to be collected from the care provider at the earliest opportunity/as soon as is practicable.

In addition to the above, registered childcare and play settings must continue to adhere to Standard 10.2 which states:

"No child is received if he/she appears to be ill. If children become unwell during their time in the childcare or play setting, care is taken to prevent possible infection of other children and parents are notified as soon as possible."

It must not be assumed that a child is better after receiving liquid paracetamol and in all cases the child should be collected by a parent/carer as soon as is practicable after the child becomes unwell.

Storage, Administration and Record Keeping

The Welsh Government recommends that registered providers can possess, store and administer liquid paracetamol in the limited circumstances described in this guidance.

~~the child's parent or carer has given prior consent to their child being given paracetamol;~~

~~And;~~

~~the child's parent or carer has been contacted;~~

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the parent or carer has given consent for the dose of paracetamol to be given;

a period of at least 4 hours has passed since the last dose of paracetamol was given; and

the parent or carer has undertaken to collect the child from the care provider at the earliest opportunity/as soon as is practicable. It should not be assumed that the child is better after receiving the dose;

the care provider keeps records of any paracetamol given

Or:

the care provider has attempted to contact the child's parent or carer, but they cannot be contacted;

the care provider has contacted NHS111;

a healthcare professional (at NHS111) has advised that it would be appropriate for a dose of paracetamol to be given; and

the care provider subsequently contacts the child's parent or carer to arrange for the child to be collected from the care provider at the earliest opportunity/as soon as is practicable. It should not be assumed that the child is better after receiving the dose;

the care provider keeps records of any paracetamol given.

• Childcare settings providers can should purchase sachets of liquid paracetamol/paracetamol sugar free oral suspension each containing 120mg of paracetamol in each 5mL sachet. Advice about purchasing liquid paracetamol can be obtained from any pharmacy.

The provider~~and~~ must ensure arrangements are in place for the safe storage, administration and record keeping of doses of liquid paracetamol used in accordance with the medicines policy.

The expiry dates of all stocked medicines must be checked regularly (at least every three months), and before every administration.

• All doses of liquid paracetamol given to a child at the registered setting in accordance with this guidance, must be recorded at the time of administration.

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~~• The expiry dates of all stocked medicines must be checked regularly (at least every three months), and before every administration.~~

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~~The following outlines the conditions under which a registered childcare or play setting is permitted to administer liquid paracetamol:~~

- ~~• A child can become acutely ill (raised temperature or mild to moderate pain e.g. teething) whilst in a setting.~~
- ~~• In these situations, it is most appropriate for the child to be collected by a parent or carer however:~~

- ~~(a) it may take some time for the parent or carer to collect the child or arrange collection by someone else; or~~
- ~~(b)(a) the parent or carer may not be immediately contactable~~

~~In these situations, it would be appropriate for the child to be given a **single (age appropriate) dose of paracetamol** until the child can be collected subject to the following conditions:~~

- ~~(a) the child's parent or carer has given prior consent to their child being given paracetamol;~~

~~And;~~

- ~~(b)(a) the child's parent or carer has been contacted;~~
- ~~(c)(a) the parent or carer has given consent for the dose of paracetamol to be given;~~
- ~~(d)(a) a period of at least 4 hours has passed since the last dose of paracetamol was given; and~~
- ~~(e)(a) the parent or carer has undertaken to collect the child from the care provider at the earliest opportunity/as soon as is practicable. It should not be assumed that the child is better after receiving the dose;~~
- ~~(f)(a) the care provider keeps records of any paracetamol given~~

~~Or;~~

- ~~(g)(a) the care provider has attempted to contact the child's parent or carer, but they cannot be contacted;~~
- ~~(h)(a) the care provider has contacted NHS111;~~
- ~~(i)(a) a healthcare professional (at NHS111) has advised that it would be appropriate for a dose of paracetamol to be given; and~~
- ~~(j)(a) the care provider subsequently contacts the child's parent or carer to arrange for the child to be collected from the care provider at the earliest opportunity/as soon as is practicable. It should not be assumed that the child is better after receiving the dose;~~
- ~~(k)(a) the care provider keeps records of any paracetamol given.~~

~~In addition to the above, registered childcare and play settings must continue to adhere to Standard 10.2:~~

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- ~~No child is received if he/she appears to be ill. If children become unwell during their time in the childcare or play setting, care is taken to prevent possible infection of other children and parents are notified as soon as possible.~~

The administration of liquid paracetamol is reserved for urgent situations in which it is impracticable for a child's parents/carers to collect the child promptly and only where such administration is in accordance with the guidance set out in this letter.

If you have any queries in relation to the content of this ~~letter~~letter, please email ~~information redacted~~

~~The Welsh Government recommends that registered providers can possess, store and administer liquid paracetamol in the limited circumstances described in this guidance.~~

End.

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