Section 8A: Medical emergency response plans; model plan

Section 8A. (a) Each school committee and commonwealth charter school board of trustees shall ensure that every school under its jurisdiction has a written medical emergency response plan to reduce the incidence of life-threatening emergencies and to promote efficient responses to such emergencies. The plan shall be in addition to the multi-hazard evacuation plan required under section 363 of chapter 159 of the acts of 2000.

Each plan shall include:

(1) a method for establishing a rapid communication system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities and practice fields, to the emergency medical services system and protocols to clarify when the emergency medical services system and other emergency contact people shall be called;

(2) a determination of emergency medical service response time to any location on campus;

(3) a list of relevant contacts and telephone numbers with a protocol indicating when each person shall be called, including names of professionals to help with post-emergency support;

(4) a method to efficiently direct emergency medical services personnel to any location on campus, including to the location of available rescue equipment;

(5) safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the facilities;

(6) a method of providing access to training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers and other school staff, which may include training high school students in cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and

(7) in the event the school possesses an automated external defibrillator, the location of the device, whether or not its location is either fixed or portable and those personnel who are trained in its use.

Plans shall be developed in consultation with the school principal, school nurse, school athletic director, team physicians, coaches, trainers and local police, fire and emergency personnel, as appropriate. Schools shall practice the response sequence at the beginning of each school year and periodically throughout the year and evaluate and modify the plan as necessary. School officials shall review the response sequence with local fire and police officials at least 1 time each year and shall conduct periodic walk-throughs of school campuses. Plans shall be submitted once every 3 years to the department of elementary and secondary education, the local police department and the local fire department on or before September 1. Plans shall be updated in the event of new construction or physical changes to the school campus as determined by the local police department.

Included in each initial and subsequent filing of a medical emergency response plan, each school district shall report on the availability of automated external defibrillators in each school within the district, including, the total amount available in each school, the location of each within the school, whether or not the device is in a fixed location or is portable, those personnel or volunteers who are trained in its use, those personnel with access to the device during regular school hours and after and the total estimated amount of automated external defibrillators necessary to ensure campus-wide access during school hours, after-school activities and public events.

(b) The department of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the department of public health, shall develop a cost-neutral model medical emergency response plan in order to promote best practices. Said model plan shall be made available to school committees and commonwealth charter school boards. In developing the model plan, the department shall refer to research prepared by the American Heart Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and other relevant organizations that identify the essential components of a medical emergency response plan. The department shall biennially update the model plan and post the plan on its website.