

## **NEW LEGISLATION ALLOWS “SPARE” EMERGENCY ADRENALINE AUTO-INJECTORS IN SCHOOLS**

New legislation was passed in Westminster this week to allow schools in the UK to keep spare adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) for emergency use. AAIs deliver a potentially life-saving dose of adrenaline in the event of a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). The legislation comes into effect from 1 October 2017.

A working group, made up of representatives from the Anaphylaxis Campaign, Allergy UK, the British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology (BSACI), the British Paediatric Allergy Immunity and Infection Group (BPAIIG), and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), has campaigned over the last two years for the Government to amend the Human Medicines Act to allow schools to buy AAIs from a pharmaceutical supplier, without prescription, for use in emergencies. The working group and their respective organisations have welcomed the new legislation, which allows school staff to administer an emergency AAI to any child who has been assessed as being at risk of anaphylaxis.

Their campaign gained a huge groundswell of support from parents and teachers: over 1600 parents/carers and 800 teachers completed a survey in 2015 to assess backing for the campaign: over 99% of parents and 96% of teachers supported the proposal. The survey formed a crucial part of the evidence presented to the Department of Health. A public consultation conducted by the Department of Health this year also found overwhelming support for a change in the law to allow schools to hold spare AAIs, without a prescription, for use in emergencies.

A joint statement from the five organisations says:

“The rise in food allergy among young people is posing a significant risk for schools who can be faced with a life-threatening situation requiring urgent action. One in five fatal food-allergic reactions in children happen at school. Schools can now purchase the first-line treatment for anaphylaxis, without a prescription. While not compulsory, we hope many schools will take advantage of this change as part of their duty of care to those children who are at risk of anaphylaxis. This is likely to increase awareness and highlight the

need for staff to be trained to recognise and treat anaphylaxis in school. The working group is now developing a website which will provide online resources to support school staff.

For a parent of a child at risk from anaphylaxis, this will provide valuable reassurance that their child can receive prompt emergency treatment while on school premises.

We are delighted that our campaign has delivered the result we hoped for.”

Ends

Notes to Editors:

- 1) Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially fatal allergic reaction. Adrenaline is the first-line emergency treatment.
- 2) BSACI (British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology) is the national, professional and academic society, which represents the speciality of allergy at all levels. Its aim is to improve the management of allergies and related diseases of the immune system in the UK, through education, training and research.
- 3) The Anaphylaxis Campaign is the only UK-wide charity operating solely for the growing number of people at risk from severe allergic reactions and anaphylaxis.
- 4) Allergy UK is the leading national patient charity providing a wide range of support, advice and information for those living with allergic disease.
- 5) RCPCH (The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health) plays a major role in postgraduate medical education, professional standards, research and policy towards its mission to transform child health through knowledge, innovation and expertise.
- 6) BPAIIG (The British Paediatric Allergy, Immunity and Infection Group) is an affiliated specialist group of the RCPCH with members actively involved in the clinical care of children as well as in research and development of new methods of investigation and treatment of allergic, immune and infectious conditions.