

Youth Event Health Form

Purpose

The purpose of the Youth Health Form is to enable staff and volunteers to provide basic first aid, respond to medical emergencies, and provide accommodations for youth participants. The medical form is not used to collect a comprehensive medical history, but rather only the medical information that is relevant to a child's participation in a program or activity. It alerts staff to situations that will require additional follow-up with the parent/guardian.

Although some individual counties have volunteers with medical expertise (doctors, EMTs, nurses, etc.), most counties utilize health staff volunteers with limited medical training. The primary role of these volunteers is to provide basic first aid care, and thus they are not qualified to analyze or treat complex medical situations. The revised Youth Event Health form collects medical information that corresponds to the level of care (basic first aid) these volunteers are expected to provide.

Revision

The decision to update the health form was based upon two primary factors: family complaints and accommodation-related confusion. The state 4-H Youth Development Program Office and the UWEX Diversity Office had received complaints from families that the current form was intrusive and inappropriate. The old form asked for extensive medical history, and many of the questions were unrelated to program activities. For example, the form asked if a youth had ever experienced surgery, but there is no justification for inquires about prior incidents with no current medical relevance. Families were also asked to disclose information that some found sensitive or embarrassing, such whether the child wet the bed at night or had menstrual problems. In addition, one of the primary purposes of a health form is to determine whether or not accommodations are necessary, but the old form did not clearly inquire about accommodation needs. Some families noted medical conditions on the health form and assumed that accommodations would be provided, but the accommodation need was not recognized or understood by the 4-H Youth Development Educator.

The old form was collecting too much information that was medically intrusive, yet it also was not soliciting the right kind of information that would enable Educators to provide accommodations. The revised form addresses these shortcomings. It focuses on medical conditions that are relevant to the child's participation in program activities, and it specifically asks what accommodations are necessary.

All 4-H Youth Development Staff are expected to use the updated Youth Event Health Form for all 4-H youth development events, activities and programs where health forms are needed. The form is not to be changed as it has been approved by University Council and UW System Risk Management and complies with ADA and other legislation. The form can be accessed at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/resources/mgt/risk.cfm>.

Questions

Relationship with Other Forms

1. *Is it possible to have 2 health forms? One for camp and one for other programs?*

The medical information required for camps or other programs is the same. The purpose of the Youth Event Health Form is to enable staff to provide basic first aid, respond to medical emergencies, and provide accommodations. The Youth Event Health Form should be used for all programs where a medical information is needed.

2. *What about moving some of the information requests to the registration form, such as if they wear glasses, special dietary needs, sleep disturbances, etc.?*

Questions relating to medical issues are restricted to the Youth Event Health Form and cannot be included in registration or other materials.

3. *I hold a camp program that is a community partnership. The other primary partner is the school district. I have designed a health form so the requirements of both organizations are met. Can I continue to use that form?*

The Youth Event Health Form was reviewed by University Council and is compliant with ADA and other legislation; it should be used for all programs requiring medical information. Additional medical information should not be obtained using any other form. Questions that are not related to medical conditions can be included in the registration form or other related program materials.

4. *We've used the health form for ongoing events such as 4-H Shooting Sports training (multiple day event with no overnights), 4-H Interstate Exchange, ski trips, rock climbing and a couple other events. The form is used for emergencies and parent/guardian contact information. Is there another standard of information or a day-event form that could be used for events such as those where emergency contact information and permission to treat if needed?*

If medical information is required, then the Youth Health Event Form should be used. The check-in question on the Youth Event Health Forms asks parents/guardians to verify that the listed Emergency Contact information is correct. Parent/guardian signature on the Youth Event Health Form includes acceptance of permission to treat due to the following statement: "I am giving my consent in advance for medical treatment at an appropriate medical facility in case of illness or injury."

5. *The form I currently use includes an explanation and understanding of the closeness of adult volunteers when teaching archery. This is an important element that I would not want to leave the health form.*

The health form should be limited to medical information and accommodations. However, it's important that parents/guardians have detailed information about the program environment and activities so that they can make informed decisions about whether or not an activity is appropriate. The program announcement and registration materials would be the appropriate place to include this type of information. The

“Program Description Checklist” includes some characteristics you might want to use when describing your program’s activities and environment.

The Youth Event Health Form includes a statement verifying that the parent or guardian has read and understood the program description. By signing the Youth Event Health Form, parents/guardians confirm that they understand the event format and activities, such as those found in an archery program.

6. *It has been a safety practice that all medications brought to camp or an overnight event was to be locked up and distributed by official health personnel. I thought this was a state law?*

Medications that are collected should be in a secure location with the exception of medication used in treat life-threatening conditions (allergies, asthma, etc.). This must be disclosed on the Youth Event Health Form. Medications brought to the event need to be in the original medicine container with the Doctor’s name, medication name, dosage, prescription number, date prescribed and instructions.

With parent/guardian permission, youth age 14 and over can self-administer medications and self-store their medications. The Youth Event Health Form has a place for a parent/guardian to give this information. The exceptions to this would be controlled drugs (i.e. Codeine, Ritalin, Adderall, Dexedrine, etc.) which by law, must be administered and stored by event/camp health staff.

Depending upon a child’s maturity and her specific medical condition, the child may be capable of determining whether or not medication is necessary, and may be accustomed to self-administering the medication with parent/guardian approval. For example, some medications are only taken on an “as-needed” basis, and some children with diabetes self-monitor their sugar levels and inject insulin without adult assistance. The consent for medication administration section on the Youth Event Health form gives parents/guardians the option of allowing youth age 14 and older to continue to self monitor or administer medications. Other youth do not have this level of independence, and would instead require health staff to administer medication.

7. *Our camp nurse a few years ago asked to add to the health form: “May we give your child Tylenol, Benadryl, Roloids, Hydrocortisone Cream” so she wouldn’t have to call a parent for permission to give the child over-the-counter medication. Does a nurse/first-aid person need to receive permission to give a participant any of the above? Or, can those common items be added?*

Some common over-the-counter drugs can be provided but parent/guardian permission needs to be sought prior to administration. OTC medications do not have to be provided by 4-H youth development first aid stations or first aid kits. Many have not provided them due to allergy reaction warnings and recommendations that have been given in the past.

Confidentiality

8. *Camp nurses have asked for information such as motion sickness, sickle cell disease, sleep disturbances, dietary regiment, wears contacts/glasses, bed wetting and nose bleeds. Can this be added to the form?*

Health forms should only ask for critical medical information that directly relates to the child's participation in a program. The ADA states that organizations cannot make "unnecessary inquiries into the existence of a disability." Parents/guardians are required to complete the Youth Event Health Form; mandatory forms should not force disclosure of unnecessary medical information.

Given population characteristics, we know that children will participate who have motion sickness, sleep disturbances, wear glasses, nose bleeds, etc. These conditions are common and can occur in anyone, regardless of previous experience. Thus we should assume these situations will come up and be prepared to react to them, and not expect individual disclosure. Even when asked, participants may be unwilling to share this kind of information, especially if they consider it embarrassing.

A more productive approach would be to design the program environment to be flexible to this kind of human diversity. For example, rather than trying to identify participants prone to nose bleeds, instead teach counselors to practice Universal Precautions so they are protected against blood-borne pathogens. Rather than asking youth to disclose bed wetting, instead install plastic covers on all mattresses.

9. *We have camp nurses review all of the health forms and share the information with counselors so they are prepared to handle potential situations with campers. Is this appropriate?*

No, health form information is confidential and should not be shared unless necessary. Widely sharing medical information makes the program vulnerable to claims that counselors or other volunteers are treating a camper differently because of a medical condition. Information should be released on a "need to know" basis only, depending upon each individual medical situation and requested accommodation. A counselor may, or may not, need to know about a medical condition or accommodation; it depends on the situation. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Specialist can help you decide who meets the "need to know" standard and should be informed of a child's medical condition or accommodation needs.

Best Practices

10. *What are the steps I should follow if someone has asked for an accommodation?*

One of the most important steps takes place before an accommodation request is even received is to provide a clear and detailed description of the program's goals, activities and environment. Parents/guardians cannot make informed decisions if they do not understand what conditions their child will encounter. Try to provide as much information as possible about the purpose of the program and the kinds of activities that are included so that parents can determine whether or not they need to disclose a medical condition or request an accommodation. Most parents do not knowingly

place their children in unsafe medical situations; problems arise because the parents/guardians were misinformed or surprised by the program's environment. You can help parents and guardians better understand a program by using some of the descriptive language found in the "Program Description Checklist."

If a parent/guardian indicates that the child has a medical condition or may need accommodations, it's essential that you talk with the parent/guardian to confirm that you understand how the medical condition potentially affects the child's participation and what modifications might be required. The Youth Event Health Form alerts you to situations that require additional attention; it's not intended to provide you with all the medical information you might need. It's very important that you talk with the parent/guardian to make sure that you understand the impact of the medical condition and how it could affect the child's participation, especially if the child has requested an accommodation. Not everyone is comfortable with written communication, and thus sometimes information on a form is misunderstood. Directly talking with a parent/guardian helps prevent these kinds of problems.

After talking with the parent, you can also contact the ADA Specialist for more ideas or for help determining whether or not a child's medical condition or accommodation request requires more attention. The ADA Specialist can also help you obtain reimbursement for approved accommodation-related expenses. Additional information about the accommodation process is available at www.uwex.edu/diversity/resources/ada.

Accommodation decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, and depend upon an individualized assessment of the child's needs, the purpose of the program, and the program's essential eligibility requirements. Although the 4-H youth development program tries to meet individual needs and preferences, it does not automatically have to provide every requested accommodation. An accommodation can be declined if it would fundamentally alter a program, be an undue hardship, or if a youth's participation would pose a "direct threat" to the health or safety of him or herself or others. Contact the ADA Specialist as soon as possible if you think one of these situations might apply.

11. What is the most efficient way to gather information regarding changes in the health status or parent/guardian contact information since the Youth Event Health Form was submitted?

The volunteer that is completing the on site registering the youth participant can ask if there are any changes in their health status or parent/guardian contact information since the Youth Event Health Form was submitted. If yes, the youth participant would then be instructed to go and see the volunteer health staff person. The Health Staff Volunteer can clarify with the youth any changes and make appropriate follow up calls to the parent/guardian for verification as needed. This information should be documented on the young persons Youth Event Health Form. Creating additional forms to gather health information is not allowed.