NSW Department of Education

Health and Development Checks in Early Learning Services: Pre-visit checklist

This checklist has been developed to guide early learning services in preparing for the Health and Development Checks in Early Learning Services (HDC) program. The checklist is designed to assist your service in ensuring children, families and staff are adequately prepared, and all regulatory requirements are met before, during and after the visit.

Your Local Health District (District) will contact you to organise a time for your health check visit and provide your service with key documents for families including consent forms, pre-assessment parent questionnaire, information sheets and posters. Please visit the website and see Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for further information on organising a health check visit.

Before the visit:

- ❑ Arrange suitable time and date with the District.
- ❑ Communicate with parents and families and provide key documents including consent forms via your preferred communication method (email, online platform, printed copies).
- ❑ Display the HDC poster in a visible position.
- ❑ Verify Working with Children Checks (WWCC) of all the members of the health check team including any member from the District, Ministry of Health and/or any member from the Department of Education. All individuals engaged by your service who are working directly with children are required to hold a valid WWCC which must be verified through the Office of the Children's Guardian portal. You will need the team member's family name, birth date and WWCC number which you will find in your confirmation email from the District. See Regulation 358 for further information.
- ❑ Ensure staff who will be supporting on the day have sound knowledge of the program and their role through reading information sheet.

- ❑ Consider how your service may embed a culturally safe approach to implementing this program. You may wish to engage with the Culturally responsive practice for Aboriginal children and families video resource.
- ❑ Engage in discussions with children to build awareness of the HDC program and ensure they feel safe and supported to participate. This could include discussions around who will be visiting and what they will be doing on the day.
- ❑ If the visit will be occurring offsite, ensure that you have engaged with the Department of Education's Transporting Children Safely resourceshttps://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/leadership/resource-library/transporting-children-safely and have implemented required processes including risk assessments and written authorisations.
- ❑ Where families have given consent, educators and teachers may provide information to the District on individual child development. Services should confirm the process for this with their District.

Prior to the date of the visit:

- ❑ Collect the consent forms and pre-assessment parent questionnaires. Confirm with the District when these forms are due and follow up with any families who have not returned the forms by the due date.
- ❑ Send families a reminder with the date and time of the visit.
- ❑ Set up a clear schedule for the checks, including planning for educator backfill to ensure child-to-educator ratios will be maintained. See Regulation 123 for further information.
- ❑ Continue discussions with children to ensure they feel safe and supported to participate.
- ❑ Confirm with the District what resources or equipment may be required for the visiting members of the health check team such as adult sized tables and chairs.

On the day of the visit:

- ❑ Conduct a final briefing with staff members, ensuring that everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities, including compliance with child-to-educator ratios and supervision. An educator or teacher should be present with the child (where the family is not in attendance) and no child is to be left alone with visitors at any time.

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- ❑ Should unexpected circumstances arise, such as personal leave resulting in the service being unable to relieve a teacher or educator to supervise the checks, contact your District as soon as reasonably possible to discuss alternatives.
- ❑ Ensure all visiting health check team members and families attending the check sign in and out on the service's visitor register.
- ❑ Ensure a suitable space is available including any resources requested by the District such as adult sized tables and chairs.

After the visit:

- ❑ Work in partnership with the District to support families to access any follow-up services where applicable.
- ❑ Ensure all service staff involved in the checks maintain confidentiality at all times and that any information from the visiting health professional or the child's family is not shared outside of the service, unless parental consent has been provided.
- ❑ Use the results of the checks to inform the development of your service's Quality Improvement Plan, Strategic Inclusion Plan and Individual Learning Plans.

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