

<b>Title</b>	<b>ACIA 011 - Subcutaneous Injections in the Community by Support Workers</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>This guideline is to assist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Providers (organisations and individuals), Service Users, stakeholders and funders regarding safe and acceptable administration of subcutaneous Injections in the community by Support Workers</li> </ul>
<b>Background</b>	<p>Subcutaneous Injections (S/C) are considered a low risk area of injectable and this is often administered by the Service User or family.</p> <p><b><i>The risk is very low as there are no significant blood vessels, muscles, ligament or organs that could be damaged in the process.</i></b></p> <p>To this end it is considered safe for Support Workers who have achieved relevant competencies to deliver subcutaneous injections to administer medication.</p> <p>Historically subcutaneous injections were considered the role of a registered nurse (or Service User, family member or carer). The number of people receiving support services in the community continues to grow, and there are limited registered nurses available. It is therefore imperative to address the need of people in the community who require subcutaneous injections who cannot access a registered nurse and who do not have other appropriate supports such as carer/family.</p> <p>It is imperative to have guidelines that <b><i>manage risk appropriately</i></b> whilst ensuring all services are delivered.</p> <p>There are many areas where Support Workers have been administering subcutaneous injections for medication administration where registered nurses are not available. These include NSW, NT, SA, WA and remote communities in FN QLD.</p> <p>ACIA has discussed this issue with the Australian Nurses and Midwifery Federation (ANMF). Whilst the ANMF understands the issue they do not agree with Support Workers giving subcutaneous injections. However, <b><i>they have been unable to provide a solution</i></b> when subcutaneous medications are required to be administered and a registered nurse is not available.</p> <p>It should be noted that there is <b><i>no prohibition</i></b> under any Australian Poisons or Therapeutic Goods Acts or Regulations for any person administering or assisting in the administration of a medication prescribed by an authorised prescriber and labelled for the patient (Service User) by a registered pharmacist.</p> <p>It is now acceptable under certain conditions as deemed safe by the ordering doctor for Support Workers with appropriate competency-based training and assessment to administer medication by subcutaneous injection with a skilled registered nurse <b><i>or a person deemed competent by the provider.</i></b></p>

	<p>As Service User involvement and service direction has increased it is imperative to involve the Service User in all aspects of the service delivery and the direction of their services to their ability. It is further acknowledged that dignity of risk is an important part of this choice and control.</p>
<p><b>Disclaimer</b></p>	<p>This guideline is provided to help guide best practice in delivering supports and services in the community setting. This information does not in any way replace legislative, regulatory or contractual requirements. Users of this document should seek appropriate expert advice in relation to their circumstances.</p> <p><b><i>ACIA does not accept any liability on the use of this guideline.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Definitions and Supporting Information</b></p>	<p><b>Community Supports and/or Services</b> is defined as the provision of paid supports and services in a service user's home or community. It includes but is not limited to, the following activities of daily living:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clinical supports</li> <li>• community access</li> <li>• gardening and home maintenance</li> <li>• higher risk supports</li> <li>• housework or domestic assistance</li> <li>• nursing services</li> <li>• palliative care</li> <li>• personal care or support</li> <li>• respite care</li> <li>• social support</li> <li>• transport assistance</li> </ul> <p><b>Support Worker</b> is an individual who assists or supervises a participant to perform tasks of daily living to support and maintain general wellbeing and enable meaningful involvement in social, family and community activities in the person's home and community. The Support Worker is a paid person who has access to education, support and advice from the <b>Service Provider</b> line manager or team leader. <b>Support Worker</b> has been commonly known as attendant care worker, disability worker, aged care worker, community worker, homecare worker, care worker or paid carer.</p> <p><b>Service Providers</b> are organisation or a person who are funded for the delivery of supports and services to participants</p>

**Service User** means the person, participant, client or consumer receiving community service or support.

**Carer** is a person that provides supports to the participant at no cost (generally family or friend).

**Registered Nurse** means a person who has completed the prescribed educational preparation, demonstrated competence for practice, and is registered and licensed with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) as a registered nurse. **A Registered Nurse is required to give any other form of injection.**

**Support Worker Competency** means a support worker who has been trained and assessed as competent by a skilled registered nurse **or a person deemed competent by the provider** to safely and appropriately perform a specified task as a support worker.

**Medication** means any substance which is supplied by a pharmacist or doctor or dispensed by a pharmacist on the prescription of a doctor, or supplied directly by the doctor, and has a label attached to it. The term also includes any over the counter medication or natural therapy products.

**Administration** means the act of giving a prescribed therapeutic substance orally, by injection, by inhalation, per rectum, per vagina, topically or enterally and ensuring that the substance has entered the participant's body correctly.

**Assistance** means to give aid to Service Users in taking their medication by either reminder, prompting or by physical assistance.

**Registered nurse** means a person qualified and registered (current) by the Australian Health Practitioner Agency to deliver nursing supervision and care. Registration is published on [AHPRA Register of Practitioners](#)

**Subcutaneous Injection (SC)** – an injection directly under the skin - *It should be noted that this is considered a low risk area of injectables and is often, when possible, delivered by a Participant or family. The risk is very low as there are no significant blood vessels, muscles, ligament or organs that could be damaged in the process.*

**Supervision and oversight** (of the Support Worker by a registered nurse or suitably skilled person) encompasses the broad areas of monitoring of the practice, implementation and administration of medication via subcutaneous injection by the Support Worker; training and assessment of competency of the Support Worker in relation to administration of Insulin; provision of advice and guidance to the Support Worker when needed;

	<p>identification of potential risks, issues and development of management strategies in relation to administration of Insulin.</p> <p>Supervision and oversight can be provided face to face, by video link, and by phone – and as a combination of these.</p>
<b>Scope</b>	<p>These guidelines apply to the administration of Insulin in the community in Australia or Australian Service Users visiting overseas with their Australian Support Workers.</p>
<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce confusion as to when it is appropriate to use trained Support Workers to administer medication via subcutaneous injection to Service Users in the community</li> <li>Service Users receive support relevant to their individual need and <b>specifically subcutaneous injections</b> and medication administered that <b>limits clinical risks</b></li> </ul>
<b>Guideline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Service User has been involved in the assessment and development of the Plan for their medication sub-cutaneous injection with a skilled registered nurse <b>or a person deemed competent by the provider</b></li> <li>The provider has documented <b>written or phone orders by the doctor prescribing the medication that trained Support Workers may administer by sub-cutaneous injection</b> - see attached Doctors orders form</li> <li>That the treating doctor has been given this guideline on administration of medication by subcutaneous injection by Support Workers in the community</li> <li>The provider has appropriate policies and procedures including a training program relating to the support provided to a Service User receiving subcutaneous injections and related medication</li> <li>There is a written procedure for administration of medication by subcutaneous injection by a Support Worker to the Service User.</li> <li>The procedure and Doctors approval is attached to medication order and retained in the home of the Service User with a copy retained by the service provider</li> <li>The skilled registered nurse <b>or a person deemed competent by the provider</b> has developed an Action Plan to address any incident or emergency in relation to their subcutaneous injection or medication error</li> <li>The Action Plan identifies escalation and management of any incident or emergency</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Support Workers have completed competency-based training by a registered nurse, doctor or <b>a person deemed competent by the provider</b> - relating specifically to the Service User injection and medication needs, managing a related incident and understanding the basic knowledge relating to the medication being delivered</li> </ul> <p><b>The approval to implement individual services in accordance with this Guideline remains at the discretion of the treating doctor.</b></p> <p><b>See attached template: Doctors Order for medication to be Administered via subcutaneous injection by Support Workers</b></p>
<p><b>Resource documents</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACIA Guidelines 002 – Provision of Paid Attendant Care and Nursing in the Community</li> <li>ACIA Guidelines 004 – Administration of Oral Medications in the Community</li> <li>ACT <i>the Drugs of Dependence Act 1989</i></li> <li>SA <i>Controlled Substances (Poisons) Regulation 2011</i></li> <li>TAS <i>Poisons Regulation 2018</i></li> <li>NT <i>Poisons and Dangerous Drugs Act 1983</i></li> <li>QLD <i>Health (Drugs &amp; Poisons) Regulation 1996</i></li> <li>VIC <i>Drugs, Poisons &amp; Controlled Substances Act 2004</i></li> <li><i>Guiding Principles for Medication Management in Community 2006 (Australian Pharmaceutical Advisory Council)</i></li> <li><i>Guiding principles for medication management in residential aged care facilities – October 2012, Department of Health and Ageing, Australian Government</i></li> <li><i>Medication Support and Administration Policy – WA HACC Program and Office of the Chief Nursing Officer, Department of Health WA</i></li> </ul>

**DOCTORS ORDER FOR INSULIN TO BE ADMINISTERED BY SUPPORT WORKERS AS PER THE PROVIDERS MEDICATION GUIDELINES**

**Date:**

**Patient/Service User Details**

**Name:**

**DOB:**

**Address:**

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that in accordance with the Service Providers Guideline on the Administration of medication via subcutaneous injection in the Community by Support Workers, I consent for Support Worker/s who have been comprehensively trained and signed off as competent by a suitably skilled person, to administer medication via subcutaneous injection as per my Medication Order that is in place.

**Doctor's Details**

**Name:**

**Provider number:**

**Phone number:**

**OR**

**Stamp:**

**Doctor's Signature:**