

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



HEALTH AND CARE – POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

“LAUREN’S LAW” – THE CAMPAIGN TO HAVE ASTHMA INHALERS INCLUDED WITHIN FIRST AID KITS IN COMMERCIAL KITCHEN.

REPORT BY HEAD OF SOCIAL POLICY

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Health and Care PDSP with an overview of the “Lauren’s Law”, the campaign to change the law to enable asthma inhalers to be included in First Aid kits within commercial kitchens.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the panel notes the contents of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Human Medicines Act
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII	Other consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

At the meeting of the Council on 23rd November 2021 a motion was agreed with instructed officer to present a report to the Health & Care PDSP to outline proposal to incorporate “ Lauren’s Law” with the aim of making it mandatory for every commercial kitchen in West Lothian, under council ownership of jurisdiction to have an asthma inhaler as part of their first aid kit and to make it the responsibility of employers to provide safe storage for individuals’ medication within the premises.”

D.2 Context

One in 11 people now suffer from asthma, and for some it can be life threatening.

For one such person, Lauren Reid, a 19 year old kitchen worker in Glasgow City Centre suffered a severe asthma attack whilst at work in a commercial kitchen. Unfortunately, Lauren had left her inhaler at home and tragically the commercial kitchen sector training First Aiders on the scene were unable to help Lauren. By the time Paramedics arrived Lauren had gone into cardiac arrest, she never regained consciousness and died four days later.

Following Lauren’s death, her mother Elaine Cunningham started a campaign - Lauren’s Law, to legally require Salbutamol inhalers, now only available on prescription, to be kept in commercial kitchens.

D.3 Current Position

Current legislation does not allow for Prescription Only Medicines (POM), such as Salbutamol to be added to First Aid Kits. Therefore, without changes in legislation Salbutamol would need to be prescribed for each person working within the premises.

It should be noted that in 2014, an amendment was made to the Human Medicines Act to allow schools to purchase an emergency supply of Salbutamol (a Short Acting Beta Agonist or SABA) which can then be given to a child with a confirmed diagnosis of asthma if needed in that school in an emergency. However, this legislation is very specific and would not cover commercial kitchens.

At this time, in order to make emergency inhalers available in First Aid Kits within workplaces, such as commercial kitchen evidence would need to be presented to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency and also to the independent Commission on Human Medicines. This would also require a public consultation prior to any changes being made to current legislation.

There remains as range of considerations and regulatory process to be undertaken prior to any changes in legislation and the process is likely to be lengthy.

It is recognised that there are some working environments, such as commercial kitchens, where conditions could trigger an asthma attack due to heat, humidity, used of powders etc.

While the “Lauren’s Law” campaign continues to seek changes to the current legislation consideration could be given to the promotion of asthma training within commercial kitchens within West Lothian and awareness raising of the condition, its symptoms and management.

E. CONCLUSION

In line with the aims of the “Lauren’s Law” campaign, the process is underway to consider the inclusion of asthma inhalers in First Aid kits within commercial kitchens. However, there is still a range of legislative and regularity processes that have, as yet, to be concluded. In the absence of legislation in this area considerations should be given to the promotion of asthma training within commercial kitchen, awareness raising of the condition and the promotion good asthma management.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Appendices/Attachments: None

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