

Appendix A: Drug situations – medical emergencies

The procedures for an emergency apply when a person is at immediate risk of harm. A person who is unconscious, having trouble breathing, seriously confused or disorientated or who has taken a harmful toxic substance, should be responded to as an emergency.

Your main responsibility is for any pupil at immediate risk, but you also need to ensure the well-being and safety of others. Put into practice the Academy's first-aid procedures. If in any doubt, call medical help.

Always:

- Assess the situation. If a medical emergency, send for medical help and ambulance.

Before assistance arrives

If the person is conscious:

- Ask them what has happened and to identify any drug used
- Collect any drug sample and any vomit for medical analysis
- Do not induce vomiting
- Do not chase or over-excite them if intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance
- Keep them under observation, warm and quiet

If the person is unconscious:

- Ensure that they can breathe and place in the recovery position
- Do not move them if a fall is likely to have led to spinal or other serious injury which may not be obvious
- Do not give anything by mouth
- Do not attempt to make them sit or stand
- Do not leave them unattended or in the charge of another pupil
- Notify parents/carers

For needle stick (sharps) injuries:

- Encourage wound to bleed. Do not suck. Wash with soap and water. Dry and apply waterproof dressing
- If used/dirty needle seek advice from a doctor

When medical help arrives

- Pass on any information available, including vomit and any drug samples

Complete a medical record from as soon as you have dealt with the emergency.

(Adapted from: 'The Right Responses' (Drugscope, 1999))

Drugs refers to all drugs including medicines, volatile substances, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs.