**A DAY IN THE LIFE OF CHLOE - FOOD ALLERGY AWARENESS SUPPORTING NOTES**

***A Day in the Life of Chloe*** has been developed to increase awareness of food allergy as a serious and growing health issue and help educate people about the potentially life threatening nature of the disease.

The session is engaging and motivational, providing anyone watching with an understanding of the serious nature of anaphylaxis and an appreciation of everyone's role in supporting young people with food allergies and helping to manage risk. Every organisation is likely to have at least one person who is severely food-allergic, and many will have more.

**Key messages of the film;**

* To raise awareness of what day to day life is really like for someone with a severe food allergy.
* Demonstrating how serious food allergy can be.
* Being respectful of those who have allergies and to treat their requests seriously.
* What to do if someone starts to have an anaphylactic reaction.
* How to ensure food is prepared safely for someone with a food allergy.

**WHY WE ALL SHOULD BE MORE AWARE OF ALLERGIES.**

There has been a dramatic increase in allergic diseases in recent years, it is therefore important that everyone knows what to do to make surroundings as safe as possible for those with allergies and to know how to help them if they have a reaction.

In 2017 the Anaphylaxis campaign were alerted to nine food allergy related fatalities most of which concerned children. Unfortunately one of these deaths occurred in east Lancashire, 15 year old Megan Lee suffered an allergic reaction in December 2016 and sadly passed away a few days later.

Anaphylactic shock is a severe and rapid onset allergic response, which can result in circulatory collapse, coma and death. Signs of severe reaction can include rashing or hives anywhere on the body, a sense of impending doom, swelling of throat and mouth, vomiting, difficulty breathing, a drop in blood pressure and loss of consciousness.

Treatment for allergic reactions is needed quickly and involves the use of anti-histamines and epinephrine auto-injectors (sometimes referred to as Epi-Pens but this is one of three trade names). **It is important that everyone can recognise the symptoms and feel confident to react if the situation should arise.**

**ALLERGY AWARE – MANAGING RISK**

It is important to create a culture whereby those with allergies can participate in everyday life and not feel excluded and that too much emphasis is not placed on the allergic person being vulnerable or victims. They are normal people, living with a stressful situation, the food allergy does not determine who they are.

People with allergies have to adapt through avoidance of allergens; taking care to avoid cross contaminations of foods; carefully and consistently reading food labels; and often facing limits on social activities where food is involved (*or sometimes not going out at all*). It is important that they can rely on the support of peers and adults (if they are a child).

Unfortunately bullying does occur for children with allergies. Bullying a child with a food allergy can range from taunting the child to physically assaulting with the allergen. Educating everyone in the about food allergies will provide a more inclusive climate and aim to create more tolerance and understanding. Quite often it is the parents of other children who make matters worse, by not respecting children with allergies, and labelling them 'fussy eaters' or 'overdramatic families'.

Allergies are on the increase, therefore these allergic children will be the work force of the future, so it is important we start to raise awareness now to allow people with allergies to have as normal a life as possible.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP PROMOTE AWARENESS**

* Deliver *'A Day in the Life of Chloe'* as part of employee training days, away days or inductions.
* Create an allergy aware environment i.e. consider restricting food in certain areas, if you have a severely allergic member of staff.
* Display *'Allergy Aware'* posters around your premises.
* Ensure any canteens with catering are aware of the law around allergens – contact your local environmental health or trading standards service for more help with this if necessary.

**WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IS GOING INTO ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK**

Instructions differ depending on the brand of auto-injector used. Please ensure you read the instructions carefully on the pen before use.

**Step 1** **–** Stay calm, keep talking to the person.

**Step 2** **–** Follow the instruction on their pen.

**Step 3 –** Remove the cap. This may be covering the needle or in the top end.

**Step 4 –** Follow the instructions on how to inject, when to remove the injector and any massage requirements.

**Step 5** **–** Call 999 and ask for an ambulance. State you have a patient suffering from anaphylaxis.

**Step 6 –** A second dose may be administered after 5-15 minutes, if the patient has been prescribed one.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AROUND ALLERGIES YOU MAY FIND THE FOLLOWING LINKS USEFUL;**

**Anaphylaxis Campaign**<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk>

**Issy and Ben's Story –** an anaphylaxis campaign film for those working or living with younger people with allergies

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/campaigning/living-anaphylactic-allergies-izzy-bens-story/>

**Take the Kit –** an anaphylaxis campaign film to encourage young people to take their epinephrine/epi-pen with them wherever they go.

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/campaigning/takethekit/>

**Online training for first aiders**

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/training-for-first-aid-trainers/>

**Allergy UK**

[**https://www.allergyuk.org**](https://www.allergyuk.org)

**For school kitchens, food businesses and caterers**

**FSA Northern Ireland MenuCal –** online allergen calculator and training

<https://www.menucalni.co.uk/Account/LogOn?ReturnUrl=%2f>

**FSA online allergy training for caterers**

<http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>