**National Allergy Council sample letter to CEC service community**

Dear parents/guardians,

We are seeking your help to support the children in our CEC service who are at risk of anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that is potentially life-threatening. The most common causes of anaphylaxis in CEC services are food and insect allergies. The only way to prevent allergic reactions is to avoid being exposed to the allergen.

Our CEC service is supporting children at risk of anaphylaxis in the following ways:

* training staff,
* encouraging children with food allergy to wash their hands before and after eating,
* encouraging children to wash their hands after eating something another child they interact with is allergic to,
* teaching children not to share food with friends who have food allergy,
* teaching children the importance of getting help immediately if their friend with allergy looks sick,
* educating children about allergies and anaphylaxis, and
* teaching children that teasing someone with an allergy is not acceptable behaviour.

Food allergy is now common in children. Children can be allergic to any food, and it is not possible to completely remove all foods from our CEC service. To help manage food allergies, our CEC service is following the National Allergy Council Best Practice Guidelines (2021) which do not recommend banning foods as this is difficult to enforce and can bring a false sense of safety. Instead, we have chosen not to use nuts and nut products in our food service as these foods are not staple foods in the diet.

[Include this paragraph where appropriate] Where parents provide food, we request that parents also consider not sending nuts to the CEC service, especially for younger children. We may also send letters home if we have a child with other allergies to discuss ways that we may be able to support that child.

As we educate our CEC service community to help with the management of food allergy and anaphylaxis, the parents of the child with food allergy will continue to educate their child on self-management at a developmentally appropriate level.

We ask you to support the CEC service’s risk minimisation strategies outlined so that we can increase safety and provide an environment that meets the needs of all our children.

Yours sincerely

Supervising officer/Manager