Introduction

Approximately 150-200 fatalities per year occur from anaphylaxis related to food allergies.\(^1\) Our survey identifies existing barriers to receiving life-saving epinephrine at school, and to evaluate the need for stock epinephrine.

Background

School nurses have significant barriers associated with administering epinephrine to a student in anaphylaxis including availability of stock epinephrine, expired prescriptions, first episode with previously unknown allergies, state regulations, and legal ramifications.

Methods

In 2012, an anonymous online survey was distributed via an e-mail newsletter to the National Association of School Nurses. Excel was used to generate descriptive statistics.

Results

2,439 school nurses completed the survey. For students with known allergies, 25.3% have no epinephrine and 24.6% had two unexpired auto-injectors at school.

In each situation, the majority had the concern for legal repercussions.

Stock epinephrine available in schools may improve the likelihood that children will receive effective treatment in a timely manner.

Discussion

Significant barriers currently exist which may prevent school nurses from treating episodes of anaphylaxis with life-saving epinephrine.

References