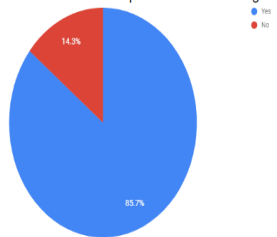


## Project Aims

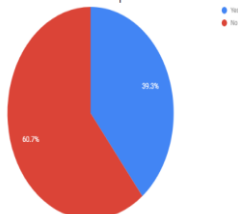
Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction to an antigen to which the body has become hypersensitive. The growing prevalence of food allergies in Ireland and the time children spend in school, places emphasis on the importance of being prepared for the allergic child in a school. This predominantly involves management of the school environment for main food allergen threats, availability and accessibility of adrenaline auto-injectors, trained school staff who recognise signs and symptoms and administration of adrenaline where required to manage the emergency anaphylaxis situation. The aims of our project were to uncover how well prepared schools are to deal with an anaphylactic reaction and consequently how safe the students with an allergy are in this environment. We also wish to uncover how informed teachers and students are on this topic as they may be in the position of saving the life of someone suffering from a severe anaphylactic reaction. We also wished to determine how well equipped restaurants are to deal with this issue and how easy they find it to comply with the introduction of legislation on allergen listing in 2014. We as students feel that our safety is being compromised by the lack of government action on anaphylaxis in schools and hope that this project will provide valuable input into the development of policy in this much neglected area.

## Restaurant Survey

Are your staff trained in the importance of food allergies?

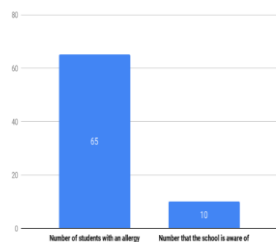


Do you have an emergency plan in place in the event of an anaphylactic reaction on the premises

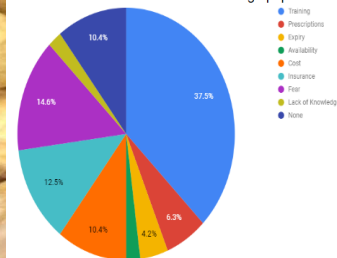


## Primary and Secondary School Surveys

Number of students with allergies which the school is aware of



What are the roadblocks to administering epi-pens?



# Anaphylaxis - We need a reaction

Why more needs to be done in relation to food allergies.

## Findings

**Student Survey:** 9.7% of students surveyed in our school have a food allergy with only 15.8% of them known to management. 33.8% state that their allergy has a negative effect on their quality of life with 32.3% not having told their friends about their allergy. 69.2% of people with allergies share food with their friends. A worrying 32.3% of students with allergies do not believe an anaphylactic shock would be well managed in school.

**Teacher Survey:** 88.9% of teachers surveyed were untrained in the use of an epi-pen, however a reassuring 91.1% would be willing to receive training. Only 2.2% could correctly recognise all symptoms of anaphylactic shock. 71% of teachers were unaware of any students in their classes with allergies.

**Management Survey:** 44.1% of Primary and only 14% of Secondary schools surveyed have an allergy management plan. 82.5% of Primary and 58% of Secondary schools have an Emergency Response Plan. 99% of Primary and 74% of Secondary schools request allergy information on their enrollment forms. 74% of management across Primary and Secondary school do not feel adequately supported by the Department of Education and Science in relation to this issue.

**Restaurant Survey:** 28.6% of restaurants surveyed did not have allergens listed in their restaurants. 85.7% of staff in restaurants surveyed received training on the importance of allergens however 7.1% of chefs were not aware of allergens in their kitchens. 50% surveyed say allergens are determined by the kitchen with only 5% using a specialist to assist.

## Recommendations

**School Policy:** We have written an example Allergy Management Plan and an Emergency Response Plan to provide guidance for the care and protection of the allergic child in school. We would encourage the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals to include our allergy management plan on its website to provide guidance to secondary schools on policy formation in relation to this important area. **Training:** We call on the Department of Education and Science to issue clear guidance to schools in relation to the administration of medication. We also call on them in conjunction with the Department of Health to design and fund a comprehensive training package for teachers from a centralised qualified source to allow them to recognise and respond to anaphylactic reaction in schools.

**Awareness:** We recommend that schools use subjects such as SPHE and Wellbeing as an opportunity to teach students about food allergies. **Restaurant Policy:** We recommend that restaurants ensure that key staff are adequately trained on allergen identification and labelling and employ specialists where necessary to assist them. We also call on the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to increase frequency of audits of premises and the government to implement tough penalties for non compliance.

## Experimental Method

**Student Survey:** We have conducted surveys in a mixed school with over 1100 students to discover the level of student awareness of anaphylaxis and to correlate student allergies to the school's awareness of these allergies. We have determined how severe allergy affects students in their day to day life and whether schools are protecting them from this potentially life threatening condition.

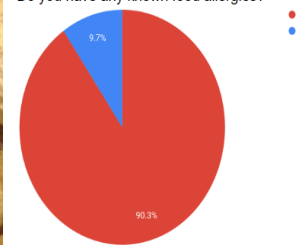
**Management Survey:** We have conducted management surveys across 152 Primary and Secondary schools in Leinster to uncover if allergen policy is consistent among schools and between different school levels. We investigated if school management are adequately supported by the Department of Education and Science in relation to allergy policy and determined what changes would need to occur to ensure that allergy management is a top priority for schools.

**Teacher Survey:** We have surveyed the teachers in the same school as we surveyed students to determine if they are aware of which students in their class have allergies and how well equipped they are to deal with a potential anaphylactic shock.

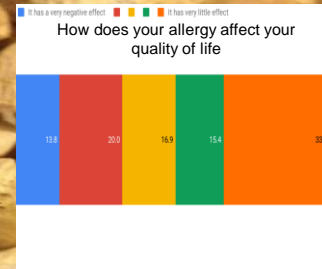
**Restaurant Survey:** We surveyed 26 restaurants in a town to determine what the roadblocks are to delivering this potentially life saving information to customers and to determine if they are complying with legislation.

## Student Survey

Do you have any known food allergies?

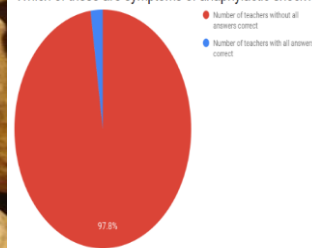


How does your allergy affect your quality of life



## Teacher Survey

Which of these are symptoms of anaphylactic shock?



Would you be willing to receive training?

