

Roles of School Health Team

School Nurse

School Nurse definition / job description is in Maine statute. This information is provided in the School Health Manual. See attached document.

- In the absence of a School-based Health Center (SBHC), the School Nurse typically coordinates all school health services and health related initiatives.
- When a school has a SBHC the School Nurse is a member of the Advisory Council.
- When a school has a Coordinated School Health Program, a School Nurse is a member of the Health Leadership Team.

School Nurse Core Functions

- Assessment and follow-up of acute and chronic health issues*
- Screening
- General medication administration
- Immunization tracking
- Communicable disease management for the school
- Health services policies
- Crisis management such as injury**
- Education of staff (e.g. train staff regarding student's health issues and educating staff on OSHA bloodborne pathogen requirements)
- Coordination and collaboration with parents, community health providers, and others, relating to the above functions.

* In many schools, this function can prevent the accomplishment of other functions, due to the volume of acute and chronic health issues that the school nurse is responding to.

**This may vary depending upon what other health professionals are at the school (I.e. Nurse Practitioner) However, the SN is usually the first person called and is responsible for triage.

- School Oral Health Program, if in place, could be under the School Nurse or SBHC as agreed upon

School Physician:

Since 1985, school administrative units have been required to appoint a school physician. Although the school nurse is generally the primary provider of health services within a school (and school-based health centers for those schools with centers), the school physician plays a critical role in guiding the policies and practices of health services provided at school.

School Physicians may:

- Assist in the development/revision of school health and safety policies and procedures and in emergency care planning for the school district.
- Provides medical consultation to the school nurses, school administration, and school health advisory committees.
 - Meets regularly with school nurses to review school health issues.
 - Provides consultation on issues of school health; e.g. environmental health, food service, health education.
 - Develops standing orders as necessary.
- Participates on the school health advisory committee.
- Acts as liaison between community physicians and the school.
 - Advocates for school health programs.
 - Interprets the role of school health to healthcare providers and community.
 - Provides information regarding health issues to the school board, as appropriate.

- School physicians may also act as medical directors for School-based Health Centers. (Please refer to the Maine Standards for School-based Health Centers).

It is encouraged that sports physicals be conducted by the student's Primary Care Provider in the context of a comprehensive physical examination and not included as part of the school physician's duties.

School-Based Health Center

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) provide expanded health services, similar to primary care providers. Students and their families choose to enroll. Services may include mental health services as well as primary physical health care.

Their role in the school includes the following:

- Get referrals from School Nurse – Extends on-site health service
- May participate in school health activities
- School Nurse is a member of the School-Based Health Center Advisory Council, other involvement in SBHC depends on an agreed upon model.
- Participate in the Health Leadership Team when a school has a Coordinated School Health Program
- School Oral Health Program if in place could be under the School Nurse or SBHC as agreed upon

School Health Coordinator for Coordinating School Health Programs (CSHP)

A job description for School Health Coordinators has been established by the Coordinating School Health Programs (CSHP). See attached document.

- Coordinate school health initiatives
- Establish / maintain leadership team to include School Nurse and/or SBHC representative
- Participate in the School-based Health Center Advisory Council when there is a School-based Health Center
- Conduct needs assessment and set needs priorities in conjunction with the Leadership Team / Advisory Council

HIPAA and FERPA for School-based Health Centers communications with Schools / School Nurse.

Two federal laws govern confidentiality and release of records in schools: HIPAA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and FERPA (the Federal Education Responsibility and Privacy Act). Generally, FERPA standards will apply to apply to all educational records. HIPAA is restricted to situations involving the use or disclosure of protected health information, i.e. individually identifiable health information. As much as we would like to be able to give more specific guidance in this area, there is no definitive guidance from the federal agencies that administer FERPA and HIPAA. Therefore, SBHCs are advised to consult their local legal counsel for guidance in the event questions should arise regarding which statute applies.