

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL NURSE

School nursing is the pivotal component in continuity of care through the coordination, planning, delivery, and assessment of school health services. School nurses use the nursing process – assessment, diagnosis, outcomes identification, implementation, planning, evaluation – which are the basis for the Standards of Practice. This process helps to promote student and staff health and safety. School nurses also develop team relationships within the school and with community health care providers, so that care is coordinated across settings to meet individual health needs and to avoid duplication of services.

The school nurse's primary role is to support student learning by acting as an advocate and liaison among the home, the school, and medical community regarding concerns that may affect a student's ability to learn. Specific responsibilities are as diverse as the clients and communities served. The school nurse contributes to all components of a Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP) by working in a team relationship with all members who are involved in the Coordinated School Health Program in school and in the central office. The role of the school nurse in the CSHP is comprised of the following:

- Health Services – Serves as the coordinator of the health services program, provides nursing care, advocates for health rights and optimization of health and abilities, and provides referrals for services.
- Health Education – Provides appropriate health information that promotes health and informed health care decisions, prevents disease, and enhances school performance.
- Environment – Identifies health and safety concerns in the school community, promotes a safe and nurturing school environment, and promotes injury prevention.
- Nutrition – Supports school food service programs and promotes the benefits of healthy eating patterns.
- Physical Education and Activity – Promotes healthy activities, physical education, and sports policies and practices that promote safety.
- Counseling and Mental Health – Provides health counseling, consults regarding mental health needs, provides interventions, refers students to appropriate school staff or community agencies, and provides follow-up once treatment is prescribed.
- Parent and Community Involvement – Promotes parent and community participation in assuring a healthy school and serves as school liaison to health-related committees.
- Staff Wellness – Provides health education and counseling, and promotes healthy activities and environment of school staff.

Minimum program requirements must be met to comply with State regulations, COMAR 13A.05.05-- .15. Additionally, the school nurse must practice within the parameters of the Nurse Practice Act and BCPS policies and procedures

Reference:
School Nursing, Scope and Standards of Practice, NASN

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