




ROLE OF HEALTH SERVICES STAFF IN SCHOOLS



MARYLAND STATE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES GUIDELINE



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MARYLAND SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES GUIDELINE

Foreword

There is a strong relationship between academic achievement and a child's physical, emotional and mental health. This link is the foundation for providing school health services as an important component of a school program. School health services provide primary prevention aimed at keeping students in schools through appropriate screenings, early identification of children at risk for physical, emotional and mental health concerns, and case management of students with chronic health concerns.

The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §7-401 requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to jointly develop public standards and guidelines for school health programs. The following guideline is developed in accordance with that requirement and is based on the expressed needs of the local school health services programs. It has been reviewed and approved by the Maryland Board of Nursing (MBON). These guidelines contain recommendations for minimum standards of care and current best practices for the health service topics addressed. It is intended that these guidelines will be used by the local school systems in developing local school health services policies and procedures as a means to assist local school health services programs in providing consistent and safe care to the students of Maryland. Specific laws and regulations that direct school nursing practice or other health services are identified in the guidelines.

The Maryland State School Health Council serves as an advisory council to both departments and as such, the council's School Health Services Subcommittee serves as the committee that develops and reviews these guidelines along with the specialists from MSDE and DHMH. School Health Services Program supervisors/coordinators also review and participate in the guideline development process. To those dedicated school health services professionals and administrators, our thanks.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL NURSE (RN)

Introduction and Background

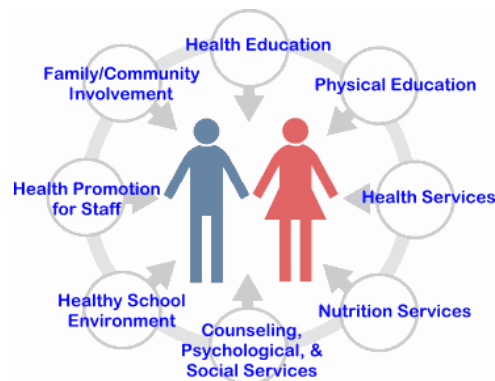
In 1991, a statewide School Health Task Force recommended that the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) appoint a committee to delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school nurse. The committee was composed of representatives from state and local health and education agencies, schools of nursing, the Board of Nursing, Maryland State School Health Council, school health nursing leadership, and a physician. The resulting guideline for the role of the school nurse was developed as a resource for local school health services programs.

These guidelines were developed using standards established by the American Nurses Association (ANA), the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), and COMAR 13A.05.05.05 -.15, School Health Service Standards. They are to be used as an adjunct to the previously mentioned resources and in conjunction with the Nurse Practice Act of Maryland. (Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 8, COMAR Title 10, Subtitle 27; Title 10 Subtitle 39).

The role of the school nurse has many facets. To ensure a successful school health program, it is necessary for the school nurse to be educationally prepared to implement assigned responsibilities. The designated school health professional, as defined in COMAR 13A.05.05.05 -.15, assists students to become successful in their educational program.

Coordinated School Health Programs

Many health problems facing students today are both interrelated and preventable. Through coordinated school health programs, schools have the opportunity to help young people acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices.



Supported by numerous national school health associations, a coordinated program is holistic - not focusing solely on physical health but also addressing the mental, social, and emotional health issues identified in the eight components of school health. The success of a coordinated school health program depends on the effective integration of these components and the subsequent academic success of children. The school nurse is an integral member of this process. See Appendix for additional information on the eight components.

Overview

School nurses function as a part of the school's multi-disciplinary team to facilitate the connection between health and wellness and learning. Working with other health professionals and ancillary personnel, the school nurse provides services for students that promote optimum health for academic success. The school nurse provides the necessary professional expertise to identify, assess, plan, implement, and evaluate the health needs of the school community. Program emphasis is directed toward prevention of disease and promotion of health utilizing health services, health counseling, and health education.

Educational Preparation

Expanded responsibilities of today's school nurse, changes in the health care delivery system, and changes in the roles of nurses make basic preparation and continuing education essential for nurses practicing in the schools. Clearly, the knowledge, skills, and attitude of the caregiver influence the quality of health care.

Practicing nursing professionals in schools may be graduates from a variety of nursing education programs. These may include: hospital (diploma) programs, associate degree programs, nursing programs at the bachelor, master, and doctoral levels and undergraduate degrees in related fields (i.e., health education, special education, guidance and counseling, or education).

The school nurse should acquire and maintain current knowledge and competency in school nursing practice. In addition to basic nursing education, advanced education for the school nurse should include: community resources and networking; special education; legal issues; counseling; crisis intervention; interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary teams; environmental hazards; chronically ill, medically fragile, and technology dependent students, and leadership (planning, developing, evaluating, and managing a school health program).

Staffing Models

School nurses strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children and by identifying and assisting in the removal or modification of health-related barriers to the learning process for individual children. This may be accomplished by identifying health-related concerns and making accommodations and/or interventions to support learning. The major focus of school nursing services is the prevention of illness and disability and the early detection and correction of health problems. The school nurse is especially prepared and uniquely qualified in preventive health, health assessment, and referral procedures. (NASN 2001)

In Maryland, a variety of school health service delivery models have been developed to assure the health needs of children are met in the school setting. These models may include, but are not limited to, school systems that utilize the following nursing personnel to assure care to students.

- Registered Nurse (RN) only
- A mix of RN and Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- A mix of RN and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- A mix of RN, LPN, and CNA

It is noted that while a school system may have a specific service delivery model the school system intends to follow, the reality is the actual staffing may be different. **Regardless of the service delivery model, the registered nurse is always the leader of the school health nursing team. The registered nurse, the expert in nursing and health, makes the decisions about how care is provided and who provides the care to the child in the school system.**

As such, only the school registered nurse has the authority to use the title school nurse. All other health staff must be referred to by their title of LPN, CNA or Health Assistant (health technician, etc.). (*MBON 2004*)

The school nurse's role can be defined, but is not limited, to the following functions:

Services to Students

The school nurse utilizes the nursing process, which is the systematic application of knowledge and skills used in assessing situations, deciding the course of action, implementing the action, and evaluating the outcomes. The school nurse:

- ❑ Promotes and protects the optimal health status of children.
- ❑ Conducts health assessments.
 - Obtains a health and developmental history.
 - Screens and evaluates findings of deficit in vision, hearing, scoliosis, growth, etc.
 - Observes the child for developmental patterns in making nursing assessment and nursing diagnosis.
 - Identifies deviant health findings.
- ❑ Develops and implements a health plan.
 - Interprets the health status of students to parents and school personnel.
 - Initiates referrals to parents, school personnel and community health resources for intervention, remediation, and follow-through.
 - Provides ongoing health counseling with students, parents, and school personnel.
 - Recommends and helps to implement modification of school programs to meet students' health needs.
 - Utilizes existing health resources to provide appropriate care to students.
- ❑ Maintains, evaluates, and interprets health data in order to meet individual needs of students.
- ❑ Provides clinical nursing services.
- ❑ Plans and implements school health management protocols for the child with special health needs.
- ❑ Participates in home visits to assess the family's needs as related to the child's health.
- ❑ Develops procedures and provides for crisis intervention, acute illness, injury, and emotional disturbances.

- ❑ Participates as a member of the school's emergency preparedness/crisis intervention team.
- ❑ Promotes prevention and control of communicable diseases through preventive immunization programs; assists in the early surveillance detection, and reporting of contagious diseases.
- ❑ Supervises paraprofessionals and delegates certain nursing functions to appropriate staff.

Healthy School Environment

- ❑ Recommends provisions for a school environment conducive to learning.
- ❑ Identifies and reports school environmental concerns and issues.
- ❑ Works with administration, faculty, and staff on remediation of issues.

Health Education and Counseling

- ❑ Provides health education.
- ❑ Provides direct health education and health counseling to assist students and families in making health and lifestyle decisions.
- ❑ Serves as a resource person to the classroom teacher and administrator in health instruction and as a member of the health curriculum development committees.
- ❑ Participates in health education, directly and indirectly, by teaching persons to become more assertive health consumers and to assume greater responsibility for their own health.
- ❑ Counsels students concerning problems, at-risk behaviors, mental health issues, and substance abuse in order to facilitate responsible decision-making practices.
- ❑ Teaches parenting skills to teen parents and parents of students as they relate to meeting developmental and health needs of children.
- ❑ Acts as a resource person in promoting health careers.

Staff Wellness

- ❑ Provides health counseling for staff.
- ❑ Provides leadership and/or support for staff wellness programs.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- ❑ Functions as an integral member of the school interdisciplinary team. The school nurse is the health specialist on child education evaluation teams to develop Individual Education Plan (IEP), on 504 teams, and on Student Services teams. (COMAR 13A.05.05.08E) If a child requires a related health service, only the registered nurse can determine whether nursing services can be delegated. If the nurse decides she/he will delegate a nursing function, the nurse must supervise that individual performing the delegated nursing function.

- ❑ Coordinates medical input from the student's health care provider and involves the health care provider as appropriate.
- ❑ Coordinates school and community health activities and serves as a liaison between the home, school, and community.
- ❑ Serves as a link between school teams, student's health care providers and school-based clinic staff.

Professional Development/Conduct

- ❑ Engages in research and evaluation of school health services to strengthen and improve school health programs and school nursing practices.
- ❑ Assists in the formation of health policies, goals, and objectives for the local school system.
- ❑ Assumes accountability for the ethics described in Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements of the (ANA). Additionally, the school nurse's practice is guided by Code of Ethics for the School Nurse promulgated by NASN. (1999). (School Nursing: A Framework for Practice.)
- ❑ Participates in continuing education programs (i.e., workshops, seminars, conferences, classes or courses, and certification or degree programs.)
- ❑ Participates in professional organizations.
- ❑ Knows and understands the legal aspects of school nursing practice and the impact on practice.
- ❑ Performs nursing duties in an ethical and professional manner.
- ❑ Accepts responsibility and accountability for professional nursing practice in the school setting.
- ❑ Maintains competence in nursing.
- ❑ Provides services with respect for human dignity.
- ❑ Safeguards client's right to privacy by maintaining confidentiality of client records and communication regarding client.

ROLE OF THE LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN) IN A SCHOOL SETTING

Introduction

Regardless of the service delivery model, **the registered nurse is always the leader of the school health nursing team.** The registered nurse, *the expert in nursing and health*, makes the decisions about how care is provided and who provides the care to the child in the school system (MBON, 2004). As such, only the school registered nurse has the authority to use the title school nurse. All other health staff must be referred to by their title of LPN, CNA, or Health Assistant (health technician, etc.).

Overview

The licensed practical nurse (LPN) functions as a part of the school's health team **under the supervision of the school nurse (registered nurse).** A school health services program **cannot** be staffed by LPNs only; they must work in a team relationship with a RN Program. Emphasis is directed toward prevention of disease and promotion of health utilizing health services and health education.

Educational Preparation

The LPN is a graduate of an approved, accredited, one-year LPN school. The LPN must have an active Maryland license as a LPN. The LPN should acquire and maintain current knowledge and competency in LPN practice.

Role of the LPN in the School Setting

Under the leadership and direction of the school RN, the LPN's role in school can be defined by, but is not limited to, the following:

Services to Students

- ❑ Promotes and protects the optimal health status of children.
- ❑ Contributes to the comprehensive nursing assessment by performing focused assessments that address common, re-occurring health needs;
- ❑ Participates in the development and modification of a comprehensive plan of care (MBON, 2004);
- ❑ Implements nursing care plans per the registered nurse, school nurse direction (MBON 2004);
- ❑ Contributes to the evaluation and documentation of the nursing intervention and revision of the plan.²
- ❑ In conjunction with the school nurse, conducts health assessments.
 - Screens and evaluates findings of deficit in vision, hearing, scoliosis, growth, etc.

- Observes the child for developmental patterns in making nursing assessment.
 - Identifies deviant health findings to report to the school nurse.
- ❑ Per direction of the school RN, assists with the development and implementation of a health plan.
 - Interprets the health status of students to parents and school personnel.
 - Initiates referrals to parents, school personnel, and community health resources for intervention, remediation, and follow-through.
 - Recommends and helps to implement modification of school programs to meet students' health needs.
 - Utilizes existing health resources to provide appropriate care to students.
 - ❑ Maintains, evaluates, and interprets health data in order to meet individual needs of students.
 - ❑ Provides clinical LPN nursing services as authorized by the Nurse Practice Act.
 - ❑ Implements school health management protocols for the child with special health needs.
 - ❑ Implements procedures developed for emergency preparedness, acute illness, injury, and emotional disturbances.
 - ❑ Participates as a member of the school's emergency preparedness team.
 - ❑ Promotes prevention and control of communicable diseases through preventive immunization programs; assists in the early surveillance, detection, and reporting of contagious diseases.
 - ❑ Delegates certain nursing functions to unlicensed school staff, under the leadership and direction of the school RN.
 - ❑ Coordinates school and community health activities and serves as a liaison between the home, school, and community.

Staff Wellness

- ❑ Provides support for staff wellness programs.

Professional Development/Conduct

- ❑ Engages in research and evaluation of school health services to strengthen and improve school health programs and school nursing practices under the supervision of the school nurse.
- ❑ Participates in continuing education programs (i.e., workshops, seminars, conferences, classes or courses, and certification or degree programs.)
- ❑ Participates in professional organizations.
- ❑ Knows and understands the legal aspects of school LPN practice and the impact on practice.
- ❑ Performs LPN nursing duties in an ethical and professional manner.

- Accepts responsibility and accountability for professional LPN nursing practice in the school setting (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 8, Code of Maryland Regulations, Title 10, Subtitle 27).
 - Knowledge of statutes and regulations regarding nursing and nondiscrimination
 - Confidentiality of client records and communication regarding the client
 - Recognized codes of professional ethics
 - Policies and procedures of the LPN's practice setting including changing procedures in the LPN field
 - Delegation of nursing acts only to unlicensed individuals who are prepared or qualified to perform such acts
 - Responsible for the direction, instruction, and regular evaluation of those individual to which the LPN has delegated a nursing function

REFERENCES

National Association of School Nurses, *Standards of Professional School Nursing Practice* (revised 2001)

Maryland Board of Nursing, *School Health Nursing and the Child with Special Health Care Needs: Roles and Responsibilities*. Declaratory Ruling 2004-3 (2004).

www.mbon.org/practice/pdf/2004-3.pdf

ROLE OF THE CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT (CNA) IN A SCHOOL SETTING

Introduction

Regardless of the service delivery model, **the registered nurse is always the leader of the school health nursing team.** The registered nurse, *the expert in nursing and health*, makes the decisions about how care is provided and who provides the care to the child in the school system (MBON, 2004).

As such, only the school registered nurse has the authority to use the title school nurse. All other health staff must be referred to by their title of LPN, CNA, or Health Assistant (health technician, etc).

Overview

The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), also known as health assistant or health technician, etc. functions as a part of the school's health team under the leadership and direction of the school RN and the LPN. A CNA is defined by the Maryland Board of Nursing (COMAR 10, Subtitle 27) as "an individual, regardless of title, who routinely performs nursing tasks delegated by a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse for compensation."

Educational Preparation

The CNA must be a high school graduate and is required to participate and pass a 100-hour nursing assistant course approved by the Maryland Board of Nursing. The CNA must also be re-certified as required by the Maryland Board of Nursing. The CNA must have an active Maryland certification as a CNA. The CNA should acquire and maintain current knowledge and competency in CNA practice.

Role of the CNA in the School Setting

The CNA's role in school, given instruction and direction by the licensed nurse, augments and supplements the licensed nurse's care by:

- Promoting and protecting the optimal health status of children.
- Collecting and reporting routine data on students with stable, unchanging, or predictable re-occurring conditions (MBON, 2004).
- Providing the licensed nurse with feedback regarding the plan of care (MBON, 2004).
- Performing treatments as delegated by the licensed nurse (MBON, 2004).
- Providing feedback based on the student's statements or behaviors to the licensed nurse who is evaluating the plan of care (MBON, 2004).
- Administering medication with a valid health care provider's order and under the supervision of a licensed nurse.

- ❑ Administering first aid under the supervision of a licensed nurse.
- ❑ Maintaining health data in order to meet individual needs of students as directed by the licensed nurse.
- ❑ Implementing procedures developed for emergency preparedness, acute illness, injury, and emotional disturbances.
- ❑ Participating as a member of the school's emergency preparedness team.
- ❑ Promoting prevention and control of communicable diseases through the reporting of contagious diseases.
- ❑ Providing support for staff wellness programs.

Professional Development

- ❑ Participates in continuing education programs (i.e., workshops, seminars, conferences, classes or courses, and certification or degree programs.)
- ❑ Knows and understands the legal aspects of school CNA practice.
- ❑ Performs CNA duties in an ethical and professional manner.
- ❑ Is responsible and accountable for CNA practice in the school setting.
- ❑ Respects the confidentiality of client records and communication regarding the client.
- ❑ Policies and procedures of the CNA's practice setting including changing procedures in the CNA field.
- ❑ Follows recognized, generally acceptable standards for ethical nursing assistant performance.

GLOSSARY

Assessment: The act of gathering and identifying data that assists the nurse, the client, and the client's family to identify the client's problems and needs. (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 8, COMAR Title 10, Subtitle 27.)

Designated School Health Services Professional: A physician, certified nurse practitioner and/or registered nurse, or all of these, with experience and/or special training in working with children and families in community or school health programs.

Evaluation: A continuous, systematic, and complete review of the assessment, nursing diagnosis, plan of nursing care, and its implementation. (Maryland Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 8, COMAR Title 10, Subtitle 27.)

Health Education (ANA): The planning, promoting, and implementing of health instruction and the provision of consultation services in health-related matters.

License: A license issued by the Board of Nursing to practice registered nursing or licensed practical nursing. (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 8, COMAR Title 10, Subtitle 27.)

Nurse Practice Act: A statute enacted by the legislature of any state or by the appropriate officers of the district. The act delineates the legal scope of the practice of nursing within the geographical boundaries of the jurisdiction.

Paraprofessional: School health services aide, an unlicensed person who functions under the supervision of a designated school health services professional. The designated school health services professional will determine the required degree of supervision on an individual basis. A school health services aide, at minimum, must have current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid.

Planning, Implementation, Evaluation: Carrying out of the nursing plan of care. (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 8, COMAR Title 10, Subtitle 27.)

Professional Development: The maintenance of continual competence in a particular area of practice by obtaining further education or supervision as required.

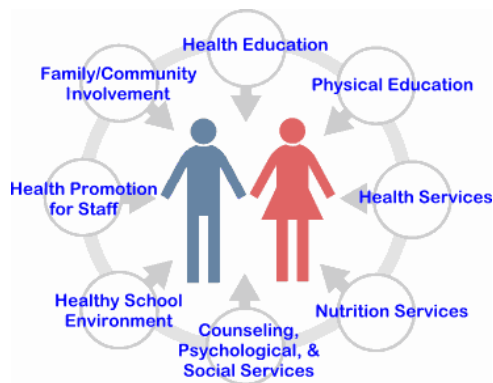
Special Health Care Needs: The-medically related services necessary during the school day and prescribed by the student's licensed physicians which enable the student to attend school. These services require training in order for them to be provided.

Standards of Practice: The minimum criteria to which the registered nurse will adhere in the practice of registered nursing. (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 8, COMAR Title 10, Subtitle 27.)

APPENDIX

Coordinated School Health Programs

Many health problems facing students today are both interrelated and preventable. Through coordinated school health programs, schools have the opportunity to help young people acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices. The American School Health Association, the Council of Chief State School Officials (CCSSO), Association of State & Territorial Health Officers (ASTHO), the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend a coordinated school health model which extends beyond the health room.



A coordinated program is holistic: not focusing solely on physical health but also addressing mental, social, and emotional health issues identified in the eight components of school health. The success of a coordinated school health program depends on the effective integration of these components and the subsequent academic success of children. The school nurse is an integral member of this process. The eight components are:

1. **Health Services:** Services provided for students to appraise, protect, and promote health. These services are designed to ensure access or referral to primary health care services or both, foster appropriate use of primary health care services, prevent and control communicable disease and other health problems, provide emergency care for illness or injury, promote and provide optimum sanitary conditions for a safe school facility and school environment, and provide educational and counseling opportunities for promoting and maintaining individual, family, and community health. Qualified professionals such as physicians, nurses, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel provide these services.
2. **Health Education:** A planned, sequential, K-12 curriculum that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health. The curriculum is designed to motivate and assist students to maintain and improve their health, prevent disease, and reduce health-related risk behaviors. It allows students to develop and demonstrate increasingly sophisticated health-related knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices. The comprehensive health education curriculum includes a variety of topics such as personal health, family health, community health, consumer health, environmental health, sexuality education, mental and emotional health, injury prevention and safety, nutrition, prevention and control of disease, and substance use and abuse. Qualified, trained teachers provide health education.

- 3. Physical Education:** A planned, sequential K-12 curriculum that provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas such as basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythms and dance; games; team, dual, and individual sports; tumbling and gymnastics; and aquatics. Quality physical education should promote, through a variety of planned physical activities, each student's optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social development, and should promote activities and sports that all students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives. Qualified, trained teachers teach physical activity.
- 4. Nutrition Services:** Access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals that accommodate the health and nutrition needs of all students. School nutrition programs reflect the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other criteria to achieve nutrition integrity. The school nutrition services offer students a learning laboratory for classroom nutrition and health education, and serve as a resource for linkages with nutrition-related community services. Qualified child nutrition professionals provide these services.
- 5. Health Promotion for Staff:** Opportunities for school staff to improve their health status through activities such as health assessments, health education, and health-related fitness activities. These opportunities encourage school staff to pursue a healthy lifestyle that contributes to their improved health status, improved morale, and a greater personal commitment to the school's overall coordinated health program. This personal commitment often transfers into greater commitment to the health of students and creates positive role modeling. Health promotion activities have improved productivity, decreased absenteeism, and reduced health insurance costs.
- 6. Counseling and Psychological Services:** Services provided to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health. These services include individual and group assessments, interventions, and referrals. Organizational assessment and consultation skills of counselors and psychologists contribute not only to the health of students but also to the health of the school environment. Professionals such as certified school counselors, psychologists, and social workers provide these services.
- 7. Healthy School Environment:** The physical and aesthetic surroundings and the psychosocial climate and culture of the school. Factors that influence the physical environment include the school building and the area surrounding it, any biological or chemical agents that are detrimental to health, and physical conditions such as temperature, noise, and lighting. The psychological environment includes the physical, emotional, and social conditions that affect the well-being of students and staff.
- 8. Parent/Community Involvement:** An integrated school, parent, and community approach for enhancing the health and well-being of students. School health advisory councils, coalitions, and broadly based constituencies for school health can build support for school health program efforts. Schools actively solicit parent involvement and engage community resources and services to respond more effectively to the health-related needs of students.

Reference: **National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Adolescent & School Health, 2002**