

PHN II School Nurse Job Description  
Oct. 2004

II. Duties and Responsibilities and Position Characteristics

This professional nursing position (school nurse) within a public health department is responsible for planning, implementing, coordinating and evaluating school health services that: 1) maximize the quantity of in class time by reducing the incidence of health related absenteeism, 2) eliminate or minimize health problems which impair learning, and 3) achieve the highest degree of independent functioning possible. More specifically, the school nurse: 1) identifies the health care needs of specific student populations and the availability of health services/resources, 2) plans and implements services to meet those health care needs, 3) assesses and evaluates the effectiveness of the services and health care plans, and 4) collaborates with a wide variety of school system and professional disciplines to enhance the educational process and the promotion of an optimal level of wellness for students, families and staff. The school nurse functions independently under state and agency guidelines and policies without on-site supervision. Work is self-directed and clinically autonomous. Limited supervision may be exercised over volunteers and/or unlicensed personnel.

To accomplish these responsibilities, the school nurse serves in the roles as program manager/coordinator, case manager/direct care provider, collaborator/advocate, educator and counselor for the entire school/school district. More specific responsibilities in each of these categories are as follows:

**40% School Health Services Program Manager/Coordinator**

In this role, the school nurse addresses system-wide health services issues that affect the entire school population, i.e., population focused care.

1. Coordination and participation in the establishment, review and implementation of school health/services policies and procedures.
2. Assurance that such policies and related procedures adhere to legal and regulatory requirements and ethical standards of nursing practice.
3. Assessment, planning and evaluation of the health services component of the coordinated school health program.
4. Implementation of communicable disease control in the school, including monitoring, surveillance and participating in disease prevention and outbreak management within the school.
5. Serving as the health care consultant for school personnel, students and their parents/families.
6. Provision of professional health leadership to administrators and school staff.
7. Development and coordination of quality improvement activities for the school health services component of the school health program.
8. Assurance that school health services and activities are appropriately documented.

9. Documentation, compilation and analysis of data for required reports on school health services.
10. Development and training of staff who provide health services, including the administration of medication to students.
11. Coordination of the establishment of guidelines, procedures and training in First Aid/CPR/First Responder Program for schools and staff.
12. Participation in the development of the school's emergency health and crises plan.
13. Where applicable, directing, monitoring and evaluating aides/assistants/volunteers assigned to the school health program.
14. Development of a system for the identification of students with special health care needs.

**35% Case Manager and Direct Care Provider for Students with Special Health Care Needs and Those Needing Health Services**

In this role, the school nurse addresses the health needs of individual students or small groups of students.

1. Identification of students with special health care needs.
2. Development of emergency action plans for students at risk of medical crises at school or during a school function.
3. Development of and monitoring of individual health care plans (IHPs) for students who need invasive procedures performed during the school day, as well as for students who may require adaptation of the learning environment or classroom schedule.
4. Provision of case management to students with complex health needs.
5. Provision of health related consultation as a member of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team.
6. Provision of consultation and recommendations in the planning and development of accommodation plans for Section 504 eligible students.
7. Determination of the tasks that may be appropriately delegated to unlicensed persons on a student by student basis and the provision of training of these people for those tasks.
8. On-going evaluation of delegated staff to assure that they can safely and effectively perform the tasks.
9. Provision of training for staff regarding chronic illnesses experienced by students at school.
10. Functioning as a health resource for chronically ill students and their families.
11. Provision of periodic health appraisals of students with identified or suspected health problems.
12. Initiation of referrals and follow-up for students with identified or suspected health problems.
13. Coordination of screening programs and immunization review/follow up for the school.

**15% Collaborator/advocate**

1. Function as the liaison between the school and local health service agencies/providers.
2. Interpret health mandates, recommendations and trends to school personnel through written materials, meetings, etc.
3. Collaborate with other student services personnel to prevent health problems from becoming reasons for educational failure.
4. Provision of guidance and support to families in finding and using treatment services.
5. Collaborate with community agencies to provide resources for students and their families through serving on committees, task forces, etc.
6. Seek out local and other resources for use in the school setting.
7. Support the development and on-going functioning of the School Health Advisory Committee.

**5% Educator for School and Community Concerns**

1. Participation with other school personnel in developing workshops for teachers, assistants and other staff on health-related topics.
2. Conducting of in-service training for school personnel on health issues.
3. Provision of classroom health instruction to increase the existing teaching staff's capacity to achieve the school's health education goals.
4. Participation in the development and implementation of health promotion activities.

**5% Counselor for Health Concerns of Students and their Families and the Staff**

1. Provision of health counseling for students and their families to maximize classroom participation.
2. Development and/or facilitation of health-oriented support groups.
3. Promotion of health through education and counseling.
4. Interpretation of students' health needs to school personnel and facilitation of understanding of and adjustment to changes and limitations.

**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

The complex role of the school nurse demands, but is not limited to an understanding of:

- Community, including community as a system and aggregates as clients
- Counseling and crisis intervention
- Case finding, case management and advocacy
- Program management, including personnel supervision
- Family theory, assessment and intervention
- Leadership, networking and collaboration
- Ethnic and cultural sensitivity and competence

- Contemporary health and psychosocial issues that influence children
- Health care delivery systems and the concepts of primary health care
- School as a non-traditional health care setting
- School health law
- Special education legislation and services
- Scope of school nursing practice
- Development, management and evaluation of school health programs
- Environmental health within the school community

Skills related to this important role include the ability to:

- Plan, coordinate and supervise the work of others
- Deal tactfully with others and to exercise good judgement in appraising situations
- Make independent and timely nursing decisions and to triage
- Secure the cooperation and respect of students, faculty and staff
- Elicit needed information and to maintain effective working relationships
- Record accurately services rendered and to interpret and explain records, reports, activities, health care plans, accommodations and medical interventions

**Qualifications:**

- Registered nurse, currently licensed in North Carolina
- Nationally certified school nurse or registered nurse working toward national certification