

SCHOOL NURSE JOB DESCRIPTION: SAMPLE  
ROLE - QUALIFICATIONS - FUNCTIONS

A. Role:

The school nurse is a registered professional nurse certified with the Maine Department of Education working in the school setting who strengthens and facilitates the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children.

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 uniquely qualified in preventive health, health assessment, and referral procedures.

B. Qualifications:

1. Possession of a current license to practice professional nursing in Maine.
2. Three year's experience as a professional registered nurse.
3. Certification as required by the Department of Education.
4. A baccalaureate degree is required. If a candidate does not have a BS degree, he/she must be matriculating in a program to gain a bachelor's degree when applying for certification. The degree can be in nursing or a related field.

C. Functions:

1. Provide health assessments.
  - a) Obtains a health and developmental history.
  - b) Screens and evaluates findings for deficits in vision, hearing, scoliosis, growth, etc.
  - c) Observes the child for development and health patterns in making a nursing assessment and nursing diagnosis.
  - d) Identifies health findings, which do not fall within the normal range.
  - e) Assists with physical examinations when conducted in the school.
2. Develops and implements a health plan.
  - a) Interprets the health status of pupils to school personnel.
  - b) Initiates referrals to parents, school personnel and community health resources for intervention, remediation, and follow through.
  - c) Provides ongoing health information to pupils, parents, school personnel and health agencies.

- d) Recommends and helps to implement modifications of school programs to meet students' health needs.
  - e) Utilizes existing health resources to provide appropriate care of pupils.
3. Maintains, evaluates, and interprets cumulative health data to accommodate individual needs of students.
  4. Participates as the health specialist on the child education evaluation team to develop the health individualized educational plan (I.E.P.)
  5. Plans and implements school health management protocols for the child with chronic health problems, including the administration of medication.
  6. Participates in home visits to assess the family's needs as related to the child's health.
  7. Develops procedures and provides for crises intervention for acute illness, injury and emotional disturbances.
  8. Promotes and assists in the control of communicable diseases through preventive immunization programs, early detection, surveillance and reporting of contagious diseases.
  9. Recommends provisions for a school environment conducive to learning.
  10. Provides information on health.
    - a) Provides health information to assist students and families in making health-related decisions.
    - b) Participates in health education directly and indirectly for the improvement of health by teaching per sons to become more assertive health consumers and to assume greater responsibility for their own health.
    - c) Provides information to adolescents concerning health problems in order to encourage responsible decision-making practices.
    - d) Serves as a resource person to the classroom teacher and administrator in health instruction and as a member of the health curriculum development committees.
  11. Coordinates school and community health activities and serves as a liaison person between the home, school, and community.
  12. Acts as a resource person in promoting health careers.
  13. Engages in research and evaluation of school health services to act as a change agent for school health programs and school nursing practices.
  14. Assists in the formation of health policies, goals and objectives for the school unit.

D. Administration:

1. Is responsible for maintaining and updating cumulative health records.
2. Helps develop/revise school health policies, procedures and standing orders.
3. Prepares the budget for school health supplies.
4. Reviews, revises and implements emergency policies, including in-service health and safety programs for personnel.
5. Prepares first aid kits for each building.
6. Organizes, instructs, and supervises school health volunteers or assistants.
7. Reports regularly in writing to the principal and superintendent on school health activities.
8. Prepares statistical reports for the Department of Educational and Cultural Services and Department of Human Services for the superintendent's signature as required.
9. Implements the school medication policy and procedure.

E. Coordination:

1. Interprets school health services to school personnel.
2. Plans, implements, and supervises school health screening programs in accordance with state and district requirements and recommendations. Provides follow-up services when indicated.
3. Interprets appraisal findings, and helps students and parents accept responsibility for diagnosis and treatment.
4. Serves as a health liaison between school, home, and the community. Makes home visits as needed.
5. Encourages parents to maintain current immunization protection as recommended by the Department of Human Services.
6. Participates in the health aspects of kindergarten pre-registration.
7. Helps school personnel recognize departures from appropriate behavior and growth patterns; helps students and staff adjust student programs when necessary to accommodate health needs of students.
8. Serves as a resource person to school personnel. Participates selectively in classroom instruction under the supervision of the teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Attend the annual school nurse update sponsored by the Department of Education in its entirety.
2. Read the Faculty Handbook, Student Handbook, Physical Education Handbook, Pupil Evaluation Team Handbook, and the School Health Manual.
3. Get to know the key people: administration, faculty, the guidance and physical education personnel, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers.
4. Obtain a private area for assessment/counseling, with proper ventilation, lighting, heat, telephone, filing, and resource materials.
5. Obtain needed supplies and equipment for the nurse's office. Include a telephone.
6. Meet with the teachers to acquaint them with the health program, health services offered and classroom emergency procedures for first aid.
7. Set up first aid kits for the various areas of your schools.
8. Set up a daily log to list those students who visit the nurse's office, or need special attention.
9. Review students' health records and inform school personnel of special health problems, possible school safety hazards. This is an excellent time to have handouts ready for the faculty in such areas as epilepsy, diabetes, etc.
10. Plan to attend as many faculty meetings as possible. This helps identify the school nurse as a member of the staff.
11. Keep lines of communication open between nurse and teachers, nurse and administration, nurse and parents, and nurse and guidance department.
12. Participate in the preparation of the school health services budget.
13. Develop full year plan for scheduled health activities including accommodated mandated reporting.
14. Join your professional organization, the Maine Association of School Nurses.
15. Prepare reports monthly/yearly. It is extremely important to document school nursing activities. This documentation provides both the superintendent and school board with information to support the need for school nursing. A yearly report should summarize data in the monthly reports.