



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Department of School Nursing

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To: School Committee

Re: Nursing Services 2018-19 Report

Introduction

According to the National Association of School Nurses, "The school nurse supports student success by providing health care through assessment, intervention, and follow-up for all children within the school setting. The school nurse addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social health needs of students and supports their achievement in the learning process." Shrewsbury Public Schools is fortunate to have a team of talented, dedicated, experienced school nurses who care for our students and staff in all of these ways each day.

Visits to the Nurse

Statistics/percentages for visits to the nurse by category remain consistent with previous years. The total number of visits for the 2018-19 school year shows an increase of 4% when compared with the previous year.

Primary Concern	Number of student visits	Number of staff visits	Total visits
Injury event	9359 (15%)	371 (19%)	10,069
Illness event	33,076 (52%)	710 (35%)	33,447
Management	9534 (14%)	394 (20%)	9,928
Mental/Behavioral Health	4217 (6%)	15 (1%)	4,232
Other health	8437 (13%)	490 (25%)	8,927
TOTAL	64,623	1980	66,603

The percentage of visits to the nurse for mental/behavioral health concerns has remained consistent over a 6 year period, with an average of 5% of total visits documented for this reason between 2013 and 2019. As noted in previous reports, capturing this data can be challenging as many students present to the nurse with physical complaints (headaches, stomach aches, trouble breathing, etc) when the root cause may be social/emotional.

The Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.

The return to class rate remains consistent over several years at 93%.

School Nurse Staffing

Shrewsbury Public Schools benefit from the presence of at least one full time nurse in each of our 9 school buildings. The school nurse to student ratio at the high school (2.7 FTE school nurses), Oak Middle School (1.4 FTE), and Sherwood Middle School (1.4 FTE) is approximately 1:700; the ratio is approximately 1:550 at Floral Street School (1.3 FTE); approximately 1:350 at Coolidge School, Spring Street School and Paton School (1 FTE each); approximately 1:300 at Beal Early Childhood Center (1 FTE), and approximately 1:250 at Parker Rd Preschool (1 FTE). We are also fortunate to have a full time administrative assistant who is shared between health offices at Shrewsbury High School, Oak Middle School, Sherwood Middle School, Floral Street School.

Emergency Response

Calls to 911 were made on 11 occasions during the 2018 -19 school year; 5 calls were injury related, 5 calls were illness related, and 1 call was behavioral health related.

Epinephrine was administered one time for a student who was experiencing symptoms of anaphylaxis. Stock epinephrine was utilized for a student with a known allergy.

Mandated Screenings

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) screenings were added to the list of state mandated screenings in 2017-18. Students in grades 7 and 10 are now screened annually. This verbal screening regarding drug and alcohol use is coordinated by school nurses and conducted in conjunction with school adjustment counselors, guidance counselors and school psychologists. Below is a brief summary of the 2018-19 screening results.

Grade level	# students screened	# parent opt outs	# positive screenings*	# referrals for follow up
7	478	29	5	0
10	421	5	70	1

* a screen is considered “positive” if a student responds with anything other than no use of substances; at OMS 5 students reported very little use; at SHS 64 students reported occasional or very little use, 1 student reported 1-2x/week use, 4 reported more than 2x/week use, and 1 student reported daily use

Field Trips

Field trip preparation was completed for 77 field trips at the K-8 levels. Substitute nurses were scheduled for 43 of these trips. For those trips that did not have a nurse in attendance, nurses provided training for teachers in the administration of auto-injectable epinephrine, and when required, for delegation of oral medication per Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations.

Case Management

Care management and collaboration is a large component of the work that school nurses do each day. Nurses recorded over 19,000 communications with parents, school staff, and community providers. In addition, collaboration at team meetings to develop Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Accommodation Plans and other student-related meetings occurs on a regular basis.

Emergency Equipment

Emergency preparedness is critical for school nurses. Our schools have several mechanisms in place to allow our nurses to respond to various emergency situations.

We are in our 4th year of offering a supply stock auto-injectable epinephrine to families as an option to sending in an individual dose for their child. Approximately 80% of families with students who require this medication opt to take advantage of this option.

A supply of naloxone (Narcan) is stocked at each school building for use in the case of suspected opioid overdose.

Automated External Defibrillators (AED) are in place in each of our buildings; staff trainings in CPR and the use of AEDs are offered annually. These classes are offered at no cost to staff thanks to a generous donor, and are taught by three school nurses who are trained American Heart Association instructors.

Tourniquets are stocked in each nurse's emergency bag and in AED cases throughout the district for use in bleeding emergencies. Nurses are trained in the use of tourniquets and are able to offer trainings to interested staff.

Comprehensive School Health Services Grant

In November of 2018 the Director of School Nursing and the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services presented to the School Committee regarding our intent to apply for a Comprehensive School Health Services Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health School Health Unit. The district was awarded this grant in the amount of \$100,000 per year for a period of up to ten years (an initial contract of four years with three, two-year grant extensions available).

Based on district data and experience, the Shrewsbury Public Schools priority population identified in the grant application process was students with mental and behavioral health challenges. To that end, this grant has provided partial funding for the addition of a *Transitions* bridge program at Sherwood Middle School. Similar to the *Transitions* program at Shrewsbury High School, the Sherwood Middle School program serves students who experience significant difficulty with the transition from elementary to middle school, and/or are experiencing mental or behavioral health challenges that interfere with their ability to attend or be successful at school. The program is staffed by a clinician (school adjustment counselor) and an academic support professional, and provides clinical, academic, and family support, as well as care coordination with other school staff and community providers.

In addition, the Comprehensive School Health Services grant will provide funds for an audit of district equity practices. The district is currently in the process of requesting proposals for this work.

The goals and requirements of the Comprehensive School Health Services grant align well with our district strategic priorities of "learning environments where everyone's success matters" and "enhanced well-being of all". It is exciting to think about the impact that this grant funding could have on our students, families and staff.

Community Partnerships

In the Spring of 2019, two Shrewsbury Public Schools nurses served as preceptors for senior nursing students from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) Post Baccalaureate Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. MCPHS students shadowed school nurses for three days each week for five weeks in order to fulfil the clinical requirement for their Community and Home Health Nursing class. Nursing students report that the experience is both valuable and eye-opening, in that the role of the school nurse is much more complex and challenging than they assume at the start of the clinical rotation.

Five MCPHS students are currently in clinical placements with Shrewsbury Public Schools nurses. We continue to receive requests for future clinical placements from MCPHS, and most recently from UMass Medical School's Graduate School of Nursing.