

# FACT SHEET FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, FAMILIES, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

### Background:

While led by the school nurse, care coordination requires various stakeholders to work together as a united team creating a circle of support to address student health and academic success. The team-based model requires consistent engagement and communication. The goal is to manage the chronic health conditions of students so they can remain healthy and safe, enabling them to be present in school and ready to learn. Led by the school nurse, coordinated action steps undertaken by key stakeholders can secure a student-centered approach to health and learning for students with chronic health conditions. These steps will benefit students, their families, and the educational mission of schools.

Below the roles and responsibilities of the following key stakeholders are described<sup>1</sup>:

- school nurse
- family
- student
- medical healthcare provider
- school

There may be other key stakeholders, such as school counselor, school psychologist, school staff members, the students' peers, or community agencies. This will depend on the focus of the student's plan of care.

### Roles and responsibilities for the school nurse:

School nurses are typically the only person with health care expertise in the school setting. School nurses are on the front line of providing the care and oversight of care for students with a chronic health condition. Roles and responsibilities of the school nurse include:

- Identify students who have chronic health conditions and who would benefit from school nurse-led care coordination or case management.
- Plan, implement, and evaluate the school health services required to address the needs of the student with a chronic health condition.
  - Develop the individualized healthcare plan (IHP) based on orders from the healthcare providers, nursing assessment, student/family priorities, school accommodations needed, and evidence-based intervention strategies.
  - Develop the emergency care plan (ECP) to avoid or respond to a student's medical emergency
  - Lead school health team meetings.
  - Provide education and training to school administration and school personnel using a tiered approach to support students with chronic health conditions.
  - Provide education to families and students to improve student self-management of their chronic health condition.
  - Collaborate with healthcare providers to identify best ways to partner with schools to meet the health goals of their patients in a seamless manner between home, community, and school.
  - Connect families and students to community resources and partners to address items such as social determinants of health.

- Perform routine and emergency nursing interventions.
- Delegate nursing tasks, when allowed by state law, to identified unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) at school.
  - Train, assess competence, and provide ongoing supervision of the UAP and the student’s response to care.
- Maintain accurate and confidential documentation of school health services provided, communication between school, family, and healthcare provider(s), and training and supervision of school personnel who provide direct care to students.
- Obtain consent to collect and share data, observed trends, and student outcomes with the school health team and student’s medical management team.
- Participate in education planning teams, serve as the health expert who can address health barriers that may affect a student’s academic performance.
- Understand how state and federal laws apply to students with chronic health conditions and share this knowledge with members of the multidisciplinary education teams as appropriate.
- Advocate for school/district policies that support the health and academic success of students with chronic health conditions.
- Respect the student’s confidentiality and right to privacy.

### **Roles and responsibilities for families:**

Schools are often the first community setting where children manage their chronic health condition without the direct supervision of family members. Families that fulfill these responsibilities can help reduce their stress while supporting the health and academic success of their student. Roles and responsibilities for families include:

- Inform the school of a student’s chronic health condition.
- Learn about what health services are provided at school.
- Understand the school’s documentation requirements and how to submit the requested material.
- Before each new school year begins, collaborate with the child’s healthcare provider to obtain medical orders to provide care at school.
- Provide consent that allows sharing of information among the healthcare provider(s), family, and school/school nurse.
- Participate in the development of student health plans:
  - Identify student and family priorities and goals for the management of the chronic health condition at school.
  - Provide all supplies and equipment necessary for implementing your child’s healthcare plan at school. (If the family is unable, the school nurse can facilitate connecting the family to the necessary resources to acquire supplies and equipment for use at school.)
- Participate in the development of student education plan(s), as appropriate.
- Establish a communication plan with the school.
  - Provide accurate and current emergency contact information and update the school about any changes.
- Provide notice of changes in the student’s condition and/or changes in the healthcare provider’s plan of care.
- Be knowledgeable about federal and state laws that may apply to the student with a chronic health condition.
  - Advocate for resources, policies, and practices in the school and community to support management of chronic health conditions in school.
- Make school attendance a priority.
  - Send the child to school every day, unless they have necessary appointments or other health concerns (e.g. fever) that would preclude them from school.
  - Reinforce messaging that school attendance is closely linked to future health and academic success.
- Respect the student’s confidentiality and right to privacy.

### Family resources:

- Understood. (n.d.). *Partnering with your child's school*.  
<https://www.understood.org/pages/en/school-learning/partnering-with-childs-school/>
- HSC Foundation. (n.d.). *Partnering with your child's school: A parent guide*.  
<https://hschealth.org/sites/default/files/partnering-with-schools-guide-english.pdf>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Family and community engagement*.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/family-community.htm>

### Roles and responsibilities for students:

In order to provide student-centered care, it is essential that the student participate in planning and ongoing evaluation of care provided at school. Roles and responsibilities for students include:

- Come to school every day ready to learn.
- Find out who is on the school health team:
  - Communicate with the school nurse about health needs and safety concerns.
  - Know who to contact when help is needed during the school day or at school-sponsored events.
  - Help identify individuals for a circle of support to be involved in planning and providing care.
- Participate in the school's health team meetings.
- Consider wearing a medical alert identification (ID).
- Carry supplies as outlined in the IHP:
  - Know where daily and emergency supplies are located, if they are not carried.
- Tell teachers or other school personnel if symptoms of a medical emergency are being felt.
- Take charge of health conditions at school, as allowed by the IHP, working toward self-care management as is deemed developmentally appropriate.

### Roles and responsibilities for medical healthcare providers:

The student's healthcare provider(s) have a critical role in providing for a seamless continuum of care. Roles and responsibilities for medical healthcare providers include:

- Connect with school nurses to become familiar with local schools policies and practices, such as:
  - Documentation required
  - Consent required to share information
  - Options for sharing electronic health records
  - Preferred communication channels
- Have a process in place to communicate with the school as soon as a student's health status and/or treatment plan changes.
- Collaborate with schools to create a standardized approach to documentation for use in multiple schools or districts.
- Provide professional development opportunities on topics related to the management of chronic health conditions.
- Serve as a school's healthcare provider or serve on a health-related school committee (e.g. School Health Advisory Committee, School Wellness Committee).
- Respect the student's confidentiality and right to privacy.

## Roles and responsibilities for schools:

While schools focus on implementing the coordinated approach of the WSCC model to health and education, prioritizing care coordination for students with chronic health conditions serves as an important link for student health and academic success. School personnel include the school district's administrator, school principal, teachers (e.g., classroom, physical education, music), school health services (e.g., school psychologist, counselor, social worker), school-based health center staff, coaches, food service, bus drivers, and others. Roles and responsibilities for schools include:

- Understand and ensure compliance with federal and state laws that may apply to students with chronic health conditions.
- Collaborate with members of the school health services team to implement the student's healthcare and education plans throughout the school and at school-sponsored events:
  - Provide input to the team upon request.
  - Communicate with the school nurse regarding the student's progress or any concerns.
- Be able to recognize and respond to signs and symptoms of medical emergencies:
  - Know who to contact for a suspected or actual medical emergency.
  - Know how to activate local emergency medical services.
- Develop and implement school/district policy related to management of chronic health conditions in schools.
  - Support the time school nurses need (similar to teacher preparation time) to engage in care coordination activities to provide optimal support to students with chronic health conditions, such as:
    - Conducting literature reviews to stay current with best practices.
    - Collaborating with healthcare providers and families to develop student-centered health and education plans.
    - Conducting individual and classroom health education.
  - Allocate sufficient resources and technology to carry out care coordination at school and school-sponsored events:
    - Require adequate staffing of on-site personnel to implement the plan of care.
    - Include a school nurse all day, every day.
- Provide professional development for school nurses and school personnel:
  - Address the importance of chronic health condition management at school at district or school level professional development days.
  - Address the social and emotional needs of students with chronic health conditions on student's education and ability to manage chronic health conditions (e.g., impact of trauma, Adverse Childhood Experiences, social determinants).
  - Participate in the appropriate level of tiered training facilitated by the school nurse.
- Promote a positive school climate where:
  - Students can seek help from trusted adults.
  - Students with a chronic health condition are treated the same as other students, except to respond to their medical needs.
  - Students' confidentiality and right to privacy are upheld.
  - Provide accommodations as indicated in the student's healthcare and/or education plans.

## References:

<sup>1</sup>National Association of School Nurses. (2019). *Translating strategies into actions to improve care coordination for students with chronic health conditions* [White Paper]. <https://www.pathlms.com/nasn/courses/11191>.