

North Carolina School Health Program Manual

Section C, School Nursing Practice, Chapter 8, Initiating Activities

Initiating Activities for the New School Nurse

How does a new school nurse get started?

1. Identify your supervisor. If there is no nurse supervisor, determine if there is an identified Lead Nurse or another experienced nurse employed by the system. Ask the supervisor, Lead Nurse, and/or experienced nurse for the school/district expectations and the role of the school nurse.
2. Request a copy of the school nurse job description. If it appears to need revision or update, bring that to the attention of administration. (Refer to sample job description approved by School Nurse Association of North Carolina found [here](#).)
3. Review health policies and procedures that are in place. A list of recommended policies and procedures can be found on each year's [Annual School Health Services Report](#) Section One survey form.
4. Determine school assignment and location of nurse's office. Meet the principal(s) and office staff. Review health room/supplies/equipment in each assigned school. Note the location of the school nurse mailbox. If there isn't one, arrange to have one in each school.
5. Obtain information needed to plan a work schedule, taking into consideration the number of assigned schools, number and acuity of students, grades in each school, student procedures ordered in each school, and meeting schedule. Create a tentative school nurse schedule.
6. If early in the school year, determine the processes in each school for immunization review, Health Assessment review, emergency response, diabetes care training, first aid provision and first responders, responsibility for OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen training, and medication administration procedures. Locate a copy of the exposure control plan.
7. Determine faculty meeting schedule and ask to be on the agenda. At the meeting, introduce yourself, describe the school nurse role, and explain the student referral process. Distribute schedule, reminding staff that it is subject to change.
8. Locate the student health records. Determine health records maintenance process, staff access to health records, and confidentiality. Review available student health information and update as needed.
9. Review known students with chronic health conditions, life-threatening medical conditions, and/or disabilities and the process to identify students with health needs. If a system is not in place, develop one to identify students with chronic health conditions.
10. Meet with the coordinator of the Exceptional Children's Program and discuss collaboration. Meet with other Student Instructional Support Personnel (SISP).
11. Get acquainted with ancillary personnel (cafeteria, transportation, custodial staff). Assess for potential health problems or hazards and how assistance in solving may be rendered.

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12. Bookmark the DPH School Nurse Webpage and note the resources.
13. Read the NC School Health Program Manual.
14. Establish community contacts (Health Department, Mental Health, and Social Services). Identify available resources with community service clubs. Review the role of the school nurse within the local School Health Advisory Council (SHAC).
15. Review local school health data collection process on the school nurse's activities for contribution to the NC Annual School Health Services Report survey and district needs.
16. Contact the Regional School Health Nurse Consultant for professional development opportunities related to orientation to the school nurse role.

Once the school nurse has become familiar with the above activities and gained experience, next steps can include continuation of current programming as well as development of new initiatives. Setting priorities for work is discussed in Section C, Chapter 8 and additional assistance can be obtained by contacting your Regional School Health Nurse Consultant.