Standards of Practice: School Health Services

Summary:
The Vermont Standards of Practice: School Health Services Manual, (the Manual) addresses Vermont school health services in support of PreK-12 education. The information in this manual is designed to guide school nurses, school administrators, and others, in the development, implementation, evaluation, and quality improvement activities of school health services. School health services should be led by a qualified school nurse endorsed by the Vermont Agency of Education. The Manual is intended to comply with laws governing the practice of healthcare provided or delegated by healthcare providers licensed in the state of Vermont.

Manual development uses research-based nursing science, national standards of practice, the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework (ASCD, 2014), and the Framework for 21st Century School Nursing Practice (2016). It undergoes a continuous process of revision overseen by the School Nurse Advisory Committee under the auspices of Vermont Department of Health (Health Dept.) and in partnership with the Agency of Education (AOE).

*Health services, including health appraisal and counseling, communicable disease control, mental health, and emergency and first aid care, shall be made available in a confidential manner to students in each school. These health services shall be delivered by the school district’s written policies and procedures, which shall be developed in collaboration with parents and community health resources* (Education Quality Standards, 2014).

Revision Process:
The School Nurse Advisory Committee (the Committee) recommends Manual revisions to the Commissioner of Health and Secretary of Education. The Committee consists of four public school nurses, the VDH State School Nurse Consultant, the Vermont State School Nurses' Association President, the Division Director of the Maternal and Child Health division of the Health Dept., as well as professional representation from the AOE. The Committee seeks parent and student representation. Please contact the State School Nurse Consultant (contact information below) for more information and to recommend content revisions and corrections.

Sections of the Manual are revised on a rotating basis by the Committee, medical and content specialists, including leadership from Vermont chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians. The Committee seeks input from partners such as institutions of higher education, the Vermont State Board of Nursing, the Vermont Medical Society, the Vermont State School Nurses' Association, the Vermont Principals' Association, the Vermont Superintendents Association, and the Vermont School Boards Association. Health Dept. and AOE leadership and legal professionals review final content. Approved revisions are posted on the Health Dept. website (see below). Stakeholders receive electronic notification of the updates.

Organization of this manual:
Each section contains a statement of purpose, authorization, legal references (where applicable), guidance, resources and, when available, sample templates and documents. Sections describe required and recommended school nurse roles. Reference and resource materials come from legal statutes and evidence-based literature from professional and peer-
reviewed sources. Review dates are indicated on each section. Specifically identified templates may be downloaded for adaptation to your setting.

**Web links:**
Due to the limited availability of some resources, they may occasionally require a registration to access, usually for free. While every effort has been made to use the latest and correct web link to resources, you may find links that are no longer active. Please notify the Committee of the failed link and specific Section.

**Comments, corrections, and recommendations** are welcome and will be reviewed by the State School Nurse Consultant and the Committee. (Contact information below)

**History of the Vermont Standards of Practice:**
School nurses in Vermont have organized to improve student health outcomes and wellbeing since 1944. The first written descriptions of school nursing and school health services were distributed in 1972 to all schools as a guide for schools. The Manual continues to incorporate standards of practice from the National Association of School Nurses, (American Nurses Association and National Association of School Nurses, Scope and Standards of Practice, 2017). A School Nurse Evaluation Committee was established in 1984 under the auspices of the Vermont Department of Education (DOE) resulting in what is now called the Vermont School Health Services: Standards of Practice Manual.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in 2009 by the Commissioners of the Health Dept. and the DOE regarding Vermont school health services. This explains the joint effort "to link, and to optimize the efficiency of, and the efforts of the VDH and DOE in providing school health services." Manual updates result from a coordinated effort between the Agency of Education (AOE) and the Department of Health (MOU, 2015).

**School Nurse Advisory Committee 2018/19:**
*Deborah Hanson*, School Nurse Leader, ARSU, Fair Haven Union High School  
*Jenny Anderson*, School Nurse, Springfield High School, Springfield  
*Carol Hauke*, School Nurse, Rice High School, So. Burlington  
*Eva McDonough*, School Nurse, Addison Central Supervisory Union, Bridport, Shoreham, Weybridge schools  
*Sophia Hall*, President Vermont State School Nurses’ Association, Miller’s Run School, Sheffield  
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**Respectfully Submitted,**

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REFERENCES  
Vermont Department of Health: www.healthvermont.gov  