

Meeting summary for School Nurse Advisory Council Meeting (09/24/2024)

Quick recap

The School Nurse Advisory Council meeting focused on the challenges faced by school nurses, including the growing number of professional development requirements for teachers and school staff, the potential expansion of dental therapists' scope of practice, and the implications of naturopaths seeking prescriptive authority. The team also discussed the need for certification for school nurses, the potential for a certificate program, and the challenges posed by Pro-Health's circumvention of state requirements. The conversation ended with discussions on the potential benefits of involving Dave in their discussions, the need for advanced education for nurses, and the scheduling of the next meeting.

Attendees:

Patricia Phelan	Patrick Stirk
Barbara Ziogas	Sheila McKay
Chlo Bobrowski	Verna Bernard Jones
Christine Velazquez	Donna Frechette - absent -excused
Christin Kondash	Nancy Roberts
Pam Neleber - excused	Kim Sandor - absent
Donna Kosiorowski	Janene Batten

Karen Hart

Next steps

- Donna to include recommendations about nasal epinephrine in the next legislative proposal.
- Chloe to work on updating regulations to include different delivery methods for emergency medications.
- Barbara and Patricia to reach out to Dave to encourage his participation in future meetings.
- Donna to send the language regarding professional development requirements for school nurses to all committee members.
- Karen to prepare a presentation on how school nursing certification works in Massachusetts for a future meeting.

Summary

School Nurse Advisory Council Meeting

Donna, the co-chair of the School Nurse Advisory Council, expressed gratitude to the attendees and shared her experience in school health. Verna, Co-Chair and a retired school nurse, also shared her experience and involvement with the Association of School Nurses. Nancy, a school

nurse supervisor, introduced herself and expressed interest in the committee's work. Karen Hart, a school nurse supervisor, shared her experience and desire to learn more about the committee's work. Patrick introduced himself, as representative from the Connecticut Association of Public-School Superintendents, Christine, State Department of Public Health, Chlo, Department of Education, and Janene Batten, Yale University also shared their experiences and roles in school health. The conversation ended with a sense of unity and commitment to school health among the participants.

Committee Responsibilities and Challenges Discussion

Donna led a discussion about the committee's responsibilities and the challenges faced in the last legislative session. She highlighted the growing number of professional development requirements for teachers and school staff, and the need for certification for school nurses. Donna also mentioned the successful implementation of a mandatory standard orientation program for new school nurses and the potential for a certificate program for school nurses. She also discussed the upcoming issue of naturopaths seeking prescriptive authority, which could affect school health. Donna encouraged the group to consider pursuing certification for school nurses and to discuss the implications of the naturopaths' request.

Dental Therapists' Scope Expansion, Physical Therapists and Chronic Absenteeism

Donna discussed the potential expansion of dental therapists' scope of practice in Connecticut, which could include performing fillings. She mentioned that the dental therapist's lobbyist had reached out to her for support on this issue. Physical therapists want to expand their scope to include X-rays.

Barbara then brought up the topic of chronic absenteeism, suggesting that the school nurses and medical advisors should work together to address this issue. She also mentioned a new nasal epinephrine treatment, which could potentially replace EpiPens and require new training and legislation.

Addressing Pro-Health's Non-Compliance and Delivery Methods

Barbara discussed the challenges faced by school nurses due to Pro-Health's circumvention of state requirements and their refusal to complete the blue form, using a form Pro-Health created. She mentioned that John Frasinelli and SDE were working on the issue. Donna emphasized the importance of adhering to state laws and respecting the nurses' obligations. Verna and Chlo agreed with Barbara's concerns and discussed the need to expand the delivery methods for emergency medications like epinephrine. Chlo mentioned receiving an email about a change in Massachusetts legislation regarding the wording of delivery methods for epinephrine.

Naturopath Scope, Nurses, and Blue Form Updates

Chlo expressed concerns about the scope of practice for naturopaths, stating that they are trying to expand their services beyond their current licensing. She emphasized that nurses should not accept medical orders or health assessments from naturopaths, and that there is no current language allowing them to provide excuse notes for physical education. Donna agreed to include these concerns in their recommendations. Verna brought up the issue of updating the blue form, which Chlo confirmed had been updated to reflect new lead legislation and include the CDC Bright Futures schedule for screenings. However, she also noted that the printing of new blue forms is expensive and suggested the possibility of creating a fillable form.

Pro Health Health Assessment Record Discussion

Chlo discussed the potential for Pro Health to mimic the health assessment record, which could improve pediatricians' workflow. She also mentioned a legal meeting with Pro Health's legal team and their medical director. Donna asked about the inclusion of hemoglobin in the health assessment record, which Chlo confirmed was still mandated. Barbara clarified that the CDC Bright Futures screening is not required for 16-year-olds, but is done for targeted cases. The team also discussed the lipid screen for 10-year-olds and the transfer of this to the 6th-grade physical.

Addressing Medical Exemptions and Chronic Absenteeism

Chlo discussed the need for nurses to upload medical exemptions into the DPH portal to verify their authenticity. She also raised concerns about fraudulent medical exemption forms being sold by advocacy groups in Texas and Florida. Donna suggested that the committee could work to close this loophole. The committee also discussed the issue of chronic absenteeism. Patricia Phelan and Verna shared their experiences and strategies for addressing the problem within schools. They emphasized the importance of communication, which may include home visits, with families and providing support to help children attend school regularly.

School Attendance Policies and Challenges

Patricia Phelan discussed the school attendance policies and the challenges faced due to the pandemic. She mentioned that the school has a strict policy of not allowing students to return to school without their health forms, and that the number of students visiting the nurse has increased significantly. Paula, a school nurse, agreed with Patricia's points and emphasized the importance of collecting accurate health data for students. She suggested that the health forms should be standardized to ensure all necessary information is collected. Donna ended the conversation by outlining the group's next steps, including addressing chronic absenteeism and crafting recommendations for nasal epinephrine. She also mentioned home visits as a way to better understand students' attendance issues.

Inviting Dave for Valuable Input and Collaboration

The team discussed the potential benefits of involving Dave, a smart and experienced individual, in their discussions. They acknowledged his past concerns about certain issues, but believed his input could be valuable. They also noted his extensive experience and connections, including his

consultation with Dr. Fauci during the pandemic. The team agreed to invite Dave to join their meetings, with the hope that his presence would foster collaboration and provide a different perspective. They also considered the possibility of Patrick and Barbara speaking with Dave to invite him to attend the meetings. **Note: Dave submitted a resume and request to participate in the Council; will be invited to the October meeting.**

Addressing Nurse Concerns and Challenges

The team discussed Donna's concerns about the need for advanced education, with the potential involvement of the Union and Kim Sandor. Verna suggested including younger Union members in the discussions. Donna agreed to email Karen for perspective on how Massachusetts certification for nurses started and how it functions. They also discussed challenges faced by school nurses regarding recruitment and pay, with Donna proposing forwarding legislation language to ensure districts provide professional development. The next meeting is scheduled for October 29, understanding that some members have conflicts. Recommendations are due by February 1st.

AI-generated content

Checked for accuracy. With revisions by Donna Kosiorowski, Co-Chair SNAC

SNAC Meeting Schedule: All meetings held on Tuesdays from 7:30-8:30 am (note change in start time as requested by Council.

Members unable to attend any meeting, notify Donna.

10/29/24

11/19/24

12/17/24