



## **School Health Services Staff Roles**

### **Medical Advisor**

A physician currently licensed by the Texas Board of Medical Examiners who provides consultative services to the district through the health services coordinator and other administrative personnel in matters that impact the areas of comprehensive school health.

- Suggested responsibilities include:
  - Participates in the establishment of goals and priorities for the health services program;
  - Serves as a technical advisor to administration regarding policies and procedures on student and employee health, including but not limited to, management of serious physical and emotional problems, communicable disease control, health screenings, environmental hazards, first aid, accident prevention, and emergency care;
  - Advocates for the school health program and promotes discussion and collaboration with community agencies and organizations, such as medical, dental and other health professional societies, health departments, and consumer groups;
  - Serves as a consultant to coordinate health services with other district departments such as special education, athletics, physical education, food services and health education;
  - Participates in professional growth planning for school nurses and other related departments as needed;
  - Promotes communication between the school district and primary care physicians, medical specialists and health care facilities regarding treatment plans for students and employees;
  - Upon request provides review for outside proposals for health-related activities within the district such as research, service and educational activities; and
  - Serves as a member of the district's school health (education) advisory committee, exposure control committee and other committees related to health and safety issues for students and staff.

### **School Health Services Coordinator**

A health care professional at the district level who is responsible for the management and coordination of all school health policies, activities and resources, including program administration, implementation and evaluation.

- Suggested responsibilities include:
  - Plans budget;
  - Seeks alternative funding sources;
  - Determines the goals and priorities of the health services program in conjunction with nursing and other staff, within the framework established by the district;
  - Establishes the organization and determines the priority for allocation of resources to achieve the school health program goals;
  - Develops programs & recommends policies related to health & safety;
  - Collaborates with district level administrators to integrate and implement health policies, and practices with the priorities of the district;
  - Coordinates departmental and district staff development, orientation, training and certification as related to health needs of students;
  - Facilitates the district's school health (education) advisory committee;

- Serves as a member of the district health education curriculum committee, and other district committees related to health and safety issue of students and staff, such as crisis intervention planning teams, staff wellness programs, and exposure control committees;
- Assists with hiring appropriate district and campus-level staff through establishing criteria for education and experience, as well as departmental and campus staffing needs;
- Networks with internal and external stakeholders, and represents the district in discussions and collaborative programs related to student and staff health issues;
- Does performance appraisals for school health staff;
- Assesses, improves, and evaluates school health priorities and practices for the district; and
- Serves as the district's media spokesperson on health-related issues.

### **School Nurse (Registered Nurse)**

A registered nurse (RN) licensed by the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners, at the campus level who provides services that meet the needs of the students (and staff) on a school campus(es); and/or supervises and trains other staff to do so. The school nurse is responsible for implementing the district school health program in a way that is best suited to the population of the campus(es).

- Suggested responsibilities include:
  - Collaborates closely with the campus principal, school counselor, teachers, parents, food services, and other staff regarding the health needs of the general school population and those students with identified health conditions;
  - Provides direct care utilizing professional assessment skills, the nursing process and established school health protocols;
  - Initiates and maintains accurate student health records, including immunization records, medication administration records, individual student treatment records, and individualized student health care plans;
  - Establishes effective procedures for carrying out mandatory screening programs and required reports;
  - Communicates with parents regarding individual students;
  - Contributes to the school newsletter regarding health issues;
  - Attends Admission Review & Dismissal (ARD) meetings of students with identified health needs, and develops the Individual Health Plan;
  - Collaborates with the associate school psychologist/special education diagnostician regarding implementation of health related Individualized Education Plan (IEP) items;
  - Educates faculty or staff as needed on health related topics; and
  - Supervises, trains and evaluates LVNs and/or unlicensed assistive personnel, or other school personnel, designated by the campus principal to have responsibility for assisting students with health needs.
- **ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO:** The identified student health needs may not receive proper attention, assessment, planning, evaluation, referral, follow up, parent contact, etc. if the RN's time is utilized inefficiently. Task oriented practice reacts to the needs of the presenting students, staff or parents and does not allow for thorough evaluation of overall true health needs. Professional time may be spent performing tasks that any adult staff member can do, i.e. providing lip balm, sunscreen, repairing eyeglasses or clothing, tending minor scrapes, headchecks, diaper changes. It is advisable to allow the RN to utilize professional judgment in establishing health priorities.
- *§153.1022. Minimum Salary Schedule for Certain Professional Staff.*

*(a) Definitions and eligibility. The following definitions and eligibility criteria apply to the increases in the minimum salary schedule in accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 21.*

*(1) The staff positions that qualify for the salary increase include classroom teachers and full-time librarians, counselors, and nurses employed by public school districts and who are entitled to a minimum salary under TEC, §21.402.*

***Commissioner's Rules -- Creditable Years of Service §153.CC.***

*(D) A school nurse is an educator employed to provide full-time nursing and health care services and who meets all the requirements to practice as a registered nurse (RN) pursuant to the Nursing Practice Act and the rules and regulations relating to professional nurse education, licensure, and practice and has been issued a license to practice professional nursing in Texas.*

## **Vocational Nurse (LVN)**

A vocational nurse, licensed by the Texas Board of Vocational Nurse Examiners, who provides direct services to meet the needs of the students (and staff) on a school campus or campuses. The school vocational nurse is responsible for implementing the district school health program under the clinical supervision of the School Health Coordinator (***RN or higher level of practitioner***) or School Nurse/RN, in a way that is best suited to the population of the campus(es).

- Suggested responsibilities include:
  - Collaborates with the campus principal, school counselor, teacher, parents, food services and other staff regarding the health needs of the general population and those students with identified health conditions;
  - Provides direct care utilizing school health protocols and care plans established by the RN or medical advisor;
  - Maintains accurate student health records, including immunization records, medication administration records, and individual student treatment records;
  - Contributes to and implements the individualized student health care plans as established by the RN;
  - Carries out mandatory screening programs and required reports;
  - Communicates with parents regarding individual students as directed by the RN;
  - Attends ARD meetings (if RN unable) of students with identified health needs, collaborating with the associate school psychologist/special education diagnostician and RN regarding implementation of health related IEP items;
  - Educates faculty or staff as needed on health related topics as directed by the RN; and
  - When directed by the RN, the LVN supervises unlicensed assistive personnel or provides guidance to other school staff on health related tasks.

ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO: LVNs (*or LPNs*) can provide care only in predictable settings with predictable results since their training is focused toward providing direct care in a structured, health care setting, which schools are not. Indirect supervision by an RN who is not on a school premises is within the standards of care, as long as the LVN is providing care for students in routine, non-complex situations, or when results are anticipated with medically involved students. LVN education does not provide, nor does their licensure allow for professional nursing assessment or the ability to establish an Individual Health Plan. The RN must have direct contact with the student and knowledge of his/her medical diagnosis, medications and other treatment requirements in order to develop the Individual Health Plan. LVNs cannot function independently without specific protocols, guidance and assessment of a supervisory registered nurse or higher-level licensed health professional. The supervising RN must conduct periodic assessments throughout the school year, and whenever a change occurs which impacts 1) the student's health needs, 2) the classroom and school setting, and 3) the skill-level and training of the LVN.

### **Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP)**

An unlicensed school staff member who is typically referred to as a Health Aide, Clinic Aide, Instructional Aide or Special Ed. Aide who carries out limited health related tasks. This person may have previous experience in health care, be certified by the state as a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA), or Certified Medication Assistant (CMA), have received formal first aid training through the Red Cross or a similar program, or may have gone through a campus or district specific orientation to school health. In schools without designated school health staff, the school office staff often fill this role. Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) are considered unlicensed assistive personnel when practicing in the school setting since they are authorized only to practice under a licensed physician.

- Suggested responsibilities include:
  - Provides basic first aid and care for minor injuries and illness according to a detailed protocol established by the RN or medical advisor;
  - Takes vital signs (temperature, pulse, respiration rate and blood pressure) only if trained for this.
  - Communicates findings to supervising school health staff for direction;
  - Contacts parents of students who need to be picked up from school according to established school health services protocols or as directed by the RN;
  - Contacts EMS according to established school health services protocols or as directed by the RN;
  - Maintains records (sorting, filing, reviewing for completeness);
  - Assists with screening programs;
  - Sends out routine notices to parents; and
  - Orders and maintains health office supplies.
- ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO: UAPs may lack an educational base for assessment skills, coordination with special education, prioritizing health issues, and the ability to understand how the components of coordinated school health are interrelated. Much responsibility for UAP oversight falls on the campus administrator. Student safety is a concern.

