



School Nurse Organization of Arizona

Position Statement on Role of the School Nurse

It is the position of the School Nurses Organization of Arizona (SNOA) that the registered professional school nurse is the leader in the school community to oversee school health policies and programs. The purpose of the school nurse is to enhance the educational process by the modification or removal of health-related barriers to learning and by promotion of an optimal level of wellness. The professional school nurse carries out functions requiring nursing judgement, uses initiative based on nursing experience, and has the education and the ability to maintain interdependent relationships with colleagues in health, education, and related professional fields.

The school nurse serves as a liaison between school personnel, family, community, and healthcare providers to advocate for health care and a healthy school environment. (American Nurses Association & National Association of School Nurses [ANA & NASN], 2011)

The responsibilities of the school nurse are not limited to, but include the following:

- The school nurse must have the knowledge and skills to plan a health program in cooperation with the administrator which includes development of health curriculum, the prevention of disease, and the promotion and maintenance of student health.
- The school nurse is responsible for conducting student health screening programs to assess physical, mental and emotional health.
- The school nurse is responsible for medication administration, health care procedures, and the development of health care plans. As in other clinical settings, the nurse develops Individualized Healthcare Plans (IHPs) in nursing language to direct nursing care for students as well as Emergency Care Plans (ECPs) written in lay language to guide the response of unlicensed personnel in a health-related emergency. Both plans are tailored to the individual needs of a specific student to improve expected care outcomes. The nurse makes decisions related to the appropriate delegation of healthcare tasks as directed by state laws and professional practice guidance. (American Nurses Association [ANA]/National Council of State Boards of Nursing [NCSBN], 2006) Students often have multiple needs that should be examined in order for the student to be able to be successful in the classroom.
- As medical and information technology advance and change, it is imperative for the school nurse to pursue professional development so the school nurse is able to provide the best possible care for the student population. (Wolfe, 2006)
- The school nurse coordinates all health services and information between home, school, private physician, clinic and other community agencies.
- The school nurse assists teachers in planning health units by providing valid resource materials and presenting demonstrations in the classroom that are relevant to healthful living.
- The school nurse interprets and alerts the staff to school health laws, health trends, and school health problems.

- The school nurse utilizes assessment skills to plan and provide first aid care for the injured and ill.
- The school nurse makes the referral for health follow-up which involves care and continued supervision and assists parents on how to use referral facilities and resources.
- The school nurse functions as a member of the school child abuse team.
- The school nurse is a standing member of the school safety committee and serves as a resource to maintenance, cafeteria, and other services involved in maintaining a healthful physical environment.
- The school nurse is accountable for keeping an accurate daily log, continuous health records, and medical emergency cards for the welfare of the child.
- The school nurse compiles accurate data of the encounters and nursing activities.
- The school nurse maintains professional self-growth through continuing education and support of professional organizations.
- The school nurse implements state and district guidelines for control of communicable disease, including state rules on immunization.

References

- American Nurses Association & National Association of School Nurses. (2011). *Scope and standards of practice – School Nursing* (2nd ed.). Silver Spring, MD: Nursesbooks.org
- American Nurses Association & National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2006). *Joint statement on delegation*. Retrieved from https://www.ncsbn.org/Joint_statement.pdf
- Wolfe, L.C. (2006). Roles of the school nurse. In J. Selekman (Ed.), *School nursing: A comprehensive text*. Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Company.