COVID-19 & the Classroom

School Nursing

Focus on methods to provide safe care and protect health workers during an uncontrolled pandemic

October 7, 2020
The information presented here is a general overview of support that may be provided by nurses in schools.

Individual schools have varying levels of school nurse support. In districts where a school nurse may not be available on site, different actions may need to be considered.
Format

Thank you for joining us this evening!

• We will take questions from the comments section in YouTube and will supplement our presentations with some of your questions

• Questions that are not answered during the webinar will be collated and may be combined with other questions and will be addressed in a “Frequently Asked Questions” document or future webinars.

• Webinar slides and videos are available at our website:
  https://abcsciencecollaborative.org/
School Health Advisory Councils
Transmission of COVID-19

- Virus causing COVID-19 is most often spread through the air by coughing or sneezing, through close personal contact (including touching and shaking hands) or through touching your nose, mouth or eyes before washing your hands.

The Swiss Cheese Model

Social Distancing  Wearing Masks  Washing Hands  Rapid Testing

All layers are important because each layer is not perfect.
COVID-19 Symptoms in Children

The most common symptoms are **cough** and **fever**

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Myalgia
- Cough
- Nasal congestion or rhinorrhea
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Poor appetite or poor feeding

Screen for COVID-19

**NO FLAGS**
Proceed to school

**EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS**
Cannot go to school
- Home for 14 days since exposure

**DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS**
Cannot go to school
- Home for 10 days since first positive COVID-19 test

**AT LEAST 1 SYMPTOM**
Cannot go to school
- Fever
- Chills
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- New cough
- New loss of taste or smell
- If confirmed positive COVID-19 OR person has not been tested: 10 days since first symptoms, no fever for 72 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine), AND, 3 days of symptom improvement, including coughing and shortness of breath
- If negative COVID-19 test: No fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine), AND they have felt well for 24 hours
- If confirmed diagnosis other than COVID-19 (e.g., stomach virus, ear infection): Follow normal school policies to return to school

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* Exposures refer to being within 6 feet of someone diagnosed with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more.
** The more narrow set of COVID-19 symptoms listed here reflects required exclusionary symptoms in order to avoid over-exclusion of people from school facilities.
Roles of the School Nurse

- **Healthcare Services**: Dealing with chronic health conditions, cute injuries and illness.
- **Health Care Education**: Provide and distribute health information and knowledge. Take part in community initiatives which specifically promote student health.
- **Emergency plans and training staff**: Initiate process quality activities and measure results.
- **Health Assessments**: Screen students for care needs. Identify and refer students for improving health conditions.
- **School Health Environment**: Promote preventive measures to avoid illnesses.
- **Health Policies & Programs**: Create and adhere to health policy & program event alerts and news.
Recommendations for Children with Special Needs

- **Masks** with a clear panel to allow for visualization of lip reading and facial expressions, may be useful for some students.

- **Face shields combined with a mask** are recommended for staff when a student cannot wear a facial covering and cannot control secretions,

- **Face shield only** when a student is unable to wear a mask.

- **Gowns and gloves** would only be required if needed for standard precautions. Consider the use of gowns or lab coats to cover staff clothing when providing personal care for multiple students within the same day.
Roles of School Nurses During COVID-19

• School nurses are the eyes and ears of public health and primary care.

• The majority (60.7%) of school nurses were included in district discussions regarding COVID-19.

• Critical activities:
  – 48% Answering phone calls from parents and community
  – 45% Education staff on COVID-19, infection control measures
  – 72% Medication and equipment returns to families
  – 43% Updating/developing school health policies

Retrieved from: https://www.nasn.org/nasn/nasn-resources/practice-topics/covid19
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cleaning and Hygiene Items</th>
<th>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand soap</td>
<td>Face shields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand sanitizer</td>
<td>Procedure masks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth face coverings</td>
<td>Gowns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloves, when used for food and custodial service</td>
<td>Gloves, when used by nurses and delegated staff</td>
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</tbody>
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*Note: Thermometers support Infection Control*
Advice School Nurses Can Share

• Stay home when you are sick.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
• Cover coughs and sneezes.
• Clean and disinfect surfaces or objects.
• Wash hands for 20 seconds.

Question 1: The state has advised schools to have a health room and a separate area/room for COVID-19 symptomatic students and staff. How does staff designate which students should go to the school health room or the COVID area/room?
Management of Children with COVID-19 Symptoms in Schools

- Student(s) displays signs of infectious illness consistent with COVID-19.
- Teacher or staff excuses student(s) from classroom, cohort/pod or area within the school and notifies COVID-19 designated POC.
- COVID-19 POC takes student(s) to designated isolation room/area until transportation can be arranged to send student(s) home or to seek emergency medical attention.

**Note:** If multiple ill students must be placed in the same isolation room/area, ensure mask use and maintain at least 6 feet of distance between them.

Decision Tree Tool or Diagnostic Flowchart

WHAT TO DO IF A STUDENT BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL OR REPORTS A NEW COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS

Student(s) displays signs of infectious illness consistent with COVID-19.

Teacher or staff excuses student(s) from classroom, cohort/pod or area within the school and notifies COVID-19 designated POC.

COVID-19 POC takes student(s) to designated isolation room/area until transportation can be arranged to send student(s) home or to seek emergency medical attention.

Note: If multiple ill students must be placed in the same isolation room/area, ensure mask use and that they maintain at least 6 feet of distance between them.

COVID-19 POC notifies parent(s), guardians, or caregiver(s) of ill student(s).

Parent(s), guardians, or caregiver(s) pick up student(s). The student(s) should consult with their healthcare provider for evaluation and determination if testing is recommended.

Student returns to school following existing school illness management policies.

A student(s) is newly identified as having COVID-19.

COVID-19 POC initiates list of close contacts*** of the ill student and communicates the possible exposure to teacher(s), staff, and parent(s), guardian(s) or caregiver(s) of student(s) in the school.

Exposed area(s) (e.g., classroom) closed off for up to 24 hours. Cleaning and disinfection of area performed by appropriate staff.

Administrators work with local health officials to assess transmission levels and support contact tracing efforts.

Close contacts*** are notified, advised to stay home (quarantine for 14 days), and to consult with their healthcare provider for evaluation and determination if testing is recommended.

Administrators or COVID-19 POC communicate with teacher(s), staff, and parent(s), guardian(s) or caregiver(s) the importance of COVID-19 mitigation strategies (e.g., staying home when sick, washing hands, wearing masks, social distancing).

Members of the student(s) household are requested to quarantine for 14 days.

Student(s) returns to school after meeting criteria for ending home isolation.***

CDC.gov/coronavirus

Note: COVID-19 POC = the designated point of contact (a staff person that is responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns, such as a nurse)

** Scenario based on geographic area with community transmission of SARS-CoV-2 the virus that causes COVID-19.

*** With no known close contact

**** Close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more within 2 days prior to illness onset, regardless of whether the contact was wearing a mask.

***** Student can end home isolation after meeting all of the following three criteria: at least 10 days since symptoms appeared, at least 24 hours with no fever-reducing medication, and symptoms have improved.
Question 2: What type of PPE should the school nurse have when managing COVID-19 positive students?
PPE for School Nurses

• Similar to other school employees, school nurses should be familiar with the general recommendations for all school employees.

• Surgical facemasks are preferred over other masks for HCPs, as surgical facemasks offer both source control and protection for the wearer against exposure to fluids, respiratory droplets, and large particles from others.

• Eye protection in areas with moderate to substantial community transmission.

Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-staff.html#school-nurses
Question 3: I'm a school Nurse: What should we do when students frequently present to the nurse with symptoms of headache and stomach ache and nausea? (but not fever)

Do we keep them out of class?

Also, how will we quarantine multiple students showing symptoms of illness, when we have limited space in the treatment room?
Recommendations from the CDC

- **Isolation Space:**
  - Establish dedicated room for symptomatic individuals that will not be used for other purposes
Isolation Rooms for Students showing COVID-19 Symptoms

• Schools should plan to have a room identified to isolate students or staff with symptoms of COVID-19 identified during the school day.

• COVID-19 POC takes student(s) to designated isolation room/area until transportation can be arranged to send student(s) home or to seek emergency medical attention.

• If multiple ill students must be placed in the same isolation room/area, ensure mask use and that they maintain at least 6 feet of distance between them.

Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-staff.html#school-nurses
Question 4: For staff who travel between multiple schools, how can we decrease the potential of spreading the virus from one school to another?

If we are in contact with someone who tests positive at one school and we have traveled to other schools prior to learning that information, will it be necessary for staff at the other schools to quarantine because we have possibly exposed them as well?
Question 5: Why is COVID considered so much more dangerous than the flu that we have seen in more recent years?
Distinguishing COVID-19

COVID-19 symptoms can also be symptoms of other illnesses

Recommendations for Children with Special Needs

- **Masks** with a clear panel to allow for visualization of lip reading and facial expressions, may be useful for some students.

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- **Gowns and gloves** would only be required if needed for standard precautions. Consider the use of gowns or lab coats to cover staff clothing when providing personal care for multiple students within the same day.
The information presented here is the most up-to-date, data-driven and evidence-based science to help school districts make important decisions regarding face-to-face instruction.

Duke University and its partners will not make decisions nor will they advise specific action.
Thank you.