



## School Health Update January 2021

First and foremost, The Division of School Health would like to express their overwhelming gratitude to all for your endurance, perseverance, professionalism, positivity, patience, and care provided throughout this past challenging year. With much appreciation and respect to all.

“Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties.”

Helen Keller

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If you are not receiving the updates, please email your county’s School Health Nurse Consultant with your email address and the county in which you work.

### 1) COVID-19 Vaccine for School Nurses

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020., the Department of Health issued an Order of the Secretary [“Requiring Health Systems, Hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Care Centers and Pharmacies to Vaccinate Certain Health Care Personnel.”](#) This Order requires that hospitals, [health systems](#), Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and pharmacies reserve at least 10 percent of each shipment of vaccine to vaccinate health care personnel not affiliated with a hospital or health system. **School nurses have been identified as personnel in Phase 1A of the distribution plan.**

To support the execution of this Order the Department has created guidance for [Healthcare Personnel Not Affiliated with a Hospital](#).

Healthcare personnel in Phase 1A not affiliated with a hospital or health system should work with an enrolled hospital, health system, FQHC or pharmacy in their jurisdiction. **A map of enrolled hospitals, health systems, FQHCs and pharmacies vaccinating healthcare personnel, including facility contact information, can be found on the Department’s website after Wednesday January 6<sup>th</sup>. School nurses may reach out to the listed contact information to schedule a vaccine appointment.**

### 2) School based Screenings

At this point the mandated screenings are still required as they are written into law and regulation. The Division of School Health does not have the authority to change that. If something does change, we will send out a notification. We recommend that screenings, at first, be prioritized for students with known or identified problems.

**3) The Chronic Disease count** is to be collected between March 15 and March 30. The data should be saved for entry into the SHARRS report once opened in May.

The SHARRS instruction manual Chapter 13 provides further guidance on collecting this data.

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Documents/School%20Health/SHARRS%20User%20Instruction%20Manual%202020.pdf>

### 4) Dental Hygiene Services Program Authorization Plan (DHSP):

- a. The plan must be **submitted** between **April 1 to April 30** for the upcoming school year
  - i. Completing the authorization plan does not submit it. Make sure it is submitted- **any SHARRS user may submit the plan**
- b. A school is still required to employ or contract with a dentist when a school has a dental hygiene program
- c. The written plan must be **approved** by the following professionals when created, amended, and at least every 3 years:

- i. Certified School Dental Hygienists (CSDH) or CSDH/Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioners (PHDHP)
- ii. School Dentist (The School Dentist has dental responsibility for the school entity.)
  - \* Required even when the CSDH is a PHDHP
- iii. School Administration (Superintendent/CEO, Assistant Superintendent or Pupil Services Director)
- d. The Authorizing Dentist assumes supervisory oversight of the Certified School Dental Hygienist (CSDH)
  - i. The **signature** of the Authorizing Dentist must be obtained annually for each CSDH
  - ii. The **signature** of an Authorizing Dentist is not required when the CSDH is a PHDHP
- e. Any school that does not submit the Dental Hygiene Authorization Plan **by April 30** will automatically be classified as a “Mandated Dental Program” and will not be able to convert to a hygiene program after April 30- **NO EXCEPTIONS** permitted due to the dynamics of the SHARRS programming

## 5) Health Records

- a. Please address the guidelines for forwarding school health records and when to discard the records.

*In PA School Code Article 14 Sec. 1409: In the case of any child of school age who enrolls in any school, public or private, in any district and who previously attended school in another district in Pennsylvania, the district or school wherein the child is newly enrolled shall request and the district or school where the child previously attended shall surrender the health record of the child. School districts, joint school boards or private schools, shall not destroy a child's health record for a period of at least two years after the child ceases to be enrolled, but may surrender such child's health record or portion thereof to his parent or guardian if the child does not re-enroll in an elementary or secondary school in Pennsylvania.*

**\*Please also refer to your school's policy and procedure regarding health records. Although the law states 2 years your school's policy may state a longer time period.**

## 6) Act 122 of 2020: Vision screening

- a) New vision screening guidelines will go into effect **after** regulations are promulgated.

[House Bill 1342](#)

(2) **The Advisory Health Board shall promulgate regulations** to establish vision screening standards based on instrument based vision screening technologies or visual acuity testing, taking into consideration national guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics AND AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PEDIATRIC OPHTHALMOLOGY AND STRABISMUS.

(e) **This section shall apply to school years beginning after the regulations are promulgated by the Advisory Health Board under subsection (a)(2).**