CREC Health Services Handbook For Elementary School

Magnet and Student Services Programs

CAPITOL REGION EDUCATION COUNCIL

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Introduction

The CREC Health Services division is committed to providing the children in CREC schools and student service programs with quality health care. The health services division staff consists of registered nurses, license practical nurses, advanced practice nurses and mental health clinicians and administrative staff.

School nursing is a specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success and life-long achievement and health of students. To that end, school nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety including a healthy environment; intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services; and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning (NASN, 2010).

School nurses manage the school health office, student health records and any on-going health concerns or injuries of students during school hours. They administer the vision, hearing and postural screenings that are mandated by the state of CT. They are an integral member of the school safety team that continuously strives to ensure the safety and well-being of all students while at school.

All information regarding a child's mental and physical health is protected in a confidential manner by health services staff.

Please feel free to contact the nurse at your child's school at any time during the school day to discuss your concerns /needs regarding your child's health care.

To protect student health and ensure appropriate care, any communication containing medical information about a student must be sent directly to the school nurse. This includes diagnoses, medications, treatment plans, medical updates, and any health-related concerns.

*Please do **not** send medical information to the main office, teachers, paraprofessionals, or administrators.*

It is imperative that the school nurse receives all medical information promptly so it can be reviewed, documented, and addressed in accordance with health and safety guidelines. This helps us provide safe, timely, and appropriate support for every student.

Health Forms Required for Enrollment in CREC Schools

Please refer to the grade your child will be attending or attends to receive the most accurate information pertaining to required health forms:

Religious exemptions are only valid if obtained prior to April 28, 2021. We do not accept religious exemptions from any state other than Connecticut, regardless of the date. If your child does not meet this requirement and your child has not had their immunizations, contact your child's physician and school nurse to discuss catch up schedule options.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) Immunization Program

All doctors and health care providers in Connecticut who vaccinate children under 19 years of age participate in the Connecticut Vaccine Program (CVP) and can give your child the vaccines he or she needs.

Through the CVP program, the state buys vaccine at the lowest possible price through a government contract and then gives the vaccines at no cost to clinics, private doctors, and other health care providers. These providers then vaccinate children without charging patients for the cost of the vaccine (health care providers may still charge an administration fee). Without this program, some insurance companies may not cover the full cost of vaccine, making it too expensive for some families. If you need help finding a health care provider for your child, call (860) 509-7929 to find a CVP provider near you.

Health Forms Required for Enrollment in CREC Schools (cont.)

Pre-school or equivalent age programs:

Documentation of a physical exam completed by a health care provider (HCP) on or after July 1st of the previous school year.

This documentation **must** include the dates of all the **required** immunizations listed below:

- DTaP: 4 doses
- Polio 3 doses
- MMR: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday
- Hep B: 3 doses, last dose on or after 24 weeks f age
- Varicella: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday or verification of disease from HCP.
- Hib: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday
- Pneumococcal: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday
- Hepatitis A: 2 doses given 6 calendar months apart and 1st dose on or after 1st birthday
- Influenza: 1 dose each pre-school year. (2 doses separated by 28 days if receiving 1st flu vaccine)- Must be administered prior to December 31st. Students who do not receive their flu shot must remain out of school until April 1st

The physical exam should include the following **required** assessments:

- HCT/HGB (anemia screening)
- Height, weight and blood pressure
- Vision and hearing screening
- TB screening
- Lead screening/lead level
- Dental screening
- Developmental and Chronic Disease assessment

Health Forms Required for Enrollment in CREC Schools (cont.)

Kindergarten or equivalent age programs:

Documentation of a physical exam completed by a health care provider (HCP) on or after July 1st of the previous school year.

This documentation **must** include the dates of all the **required** immunizations listed below:

- DTaP: At least 4 doses. The last dose on or after 4th birthday.
- Polio: At least 3 doses. The last dose on or after 4th birthday.
- MMR: 2 doses given at least 28 days apart– 1st dose on or after 1st birthday.
- Hep B: 3 doses, last dose on or after 24 wks. Of age.
- Varicella: 2 doses separated by at least 3 mos.– 1st dose on or after 1st birthday or verification of disease.
- Hib: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday for children less than 5 yrs. old.
- Pneumococcal: 1 dose on or after 1st birthday for children less than 5 yrs. Old
- Hepatitis A: 2 doses given 6 calendar months apart, 1st dose on or after 1st birthday.

The physical exam should include the following **required** assessments:

- HCT/HGB (anemia screening)
- Height, weight and blood pressure
- Vision and hearing screening
- TB screening
- Lead screening/lead level
- Dental screening
- Developmental and Chronic Disease assessment

Health Forms Required for Enrollment in CREC Schools (cont.)

Grades 1-5

Physical exam not required unless entering a CREC school for the 1st time. The exam provided for new enrollment can be the most recent physical but must have the dates of the immunization required listed below:

- DTaP/Td: At least 4 doses. The last dose on or after 4th birthday. Students who start the series at age 7 or older only need a total of 3 doses.
- Polio: At least 3 doses. The last dose on or after 4th birthday.
- MMR: 2 doses separated by at least 28days, 1st dose on or after 4th b-day
- Hep B: 3 doses, last dose on or after 24 wks. of age
- Varicella: 2 doses separated by at least 3 months– 1st dose on or after 1st birthday or verification of disease.
- Hepatitis A: 2 doses given sox calendar months apart, 1st does on or after 1st birthday.

The vaccines listed in this handbook are requirements as mandated by the State of CT. The full list of vaccines required is listed and updated by the Department of Public Health for every new school year.

General Practice and Procedures Information

When to keep your child home:

- Injuries requiring medical evaluation and/or treatment
- Children with a fever over 100.4°F (37.8°C) should stay home until there is no fever for 24 hours WITHOUT the use of medications to bring temperature down. Call your doctor if your child has a fever with pain, rash, weakness, vomiting or diarrhea.
- If a child's eye is red with cloudy or yellow/green drainage, you should call the doctor during office hours. If an eye ointment is prescribed your child may return to school 24 hours after treatment begins.
- Children with vomiting or diarrhea (3 or more watery loose bowel movements) should stay at home until at least 24 hours have passed without any further events.
- Your child should stay home if he/she has severe ear pain. Call your doctor for treatment.
- If your child has a sore throat and a fever, or a severe sore throat without fever, he/she should stay home from school.
- If your child's cough is worse than you would expect with a cold, keep him/her at home. If he/she has hard time breathing or has a fever, call your doctor.
- If your child complains of a stomachache, especially if he/she says it hurts to move and he/she does not want to eat, he/she should stay home. Call your doctor.
- If your child has impetigo (red, oozing blister areas with yellow/gold scabs on the face or body) he/she should stay home for as long as your doctor advises.
- Children with ringworm may return after treatment has begun or if area of concern is covered
- Children with Hand Foot and Mouth (Coxsackievirus) may return when they are feeling well with no fever, when the blisters have become dry, and they are not drooling.
- Children with chicken pox may return after at least 5 days has passed since eruption of vesicles or after the vesicles have become dry
- Discovery of active, live lice present (may return after initial treatment)
- Excessive, unusual, unexplained fatigue or general malaise
- Excessive, unusual, unexplained pain or discomfort

Your child will be sent home if the discovery of the above mentioned diseases, conditions or rashes occur while at school.

Please share diagnoses of communicable diseases, injuries, conditions or rashes with the nurse at your child's school.

Discharge instructions from the hospital or other medical settings should be shared with the nurse at your child's school.

Documentation should be sent to: **healthservices@crec.org**

General Practice and Procedures Information (cont.)

Contact Information:
Please remember to keep your child's school and emergency contact information up to date. We understand that transportation can be a challenge for some families; however, when a student is ill, home is the best place for recovery. School nurse offices are not infirmaries, so families must have emergency contacts available who can pick up a student within a reasonable amount of time if needed.

Change of Clothes:
Please send a change of clothes with your student. Students of all ages may need one for various reasons (spilled drinks, bodily fluid accidents, weather at the bus stop, etc.). Schools do not have extra clothing available to provide.

Health Concerns and Allergies:
Please discuss any health concerns or allergies that your child may have with the nurse at your child's school. This information will be shared in a confidential manner with the appropriate staff as necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of your child. Parents may request from the nurse that certain information not be shared with other staff members.

Attendance:
All absences must be reported to your child's school for each day that your child will be absent. The reason for the absence must be stated. A health care provider's note is required in order to return to school after an absence that exceeds 4 consecutive days. Please refer to your child's school handbook for more details.

Physical Education/Recess:
All children are required to participate in PE and recess unless a note from a health care provider is submitted stating that they should be excused and the dates that they should not participate.
A note from a parent/guardian is acceptable for up to one day of absence from PE/recess due to an injury or illness. Please make sure that your child comes to school prepared for outdoor recess and PE with a coat, snow clothes /boots, mittens, gloves as needed.

Please make sure that your child comes to school with safe, appropriate footwear to participate in PE/recess. Flip flops, slides, sandals or Crocs are not appropriate in the school setting.

Acute and Chronic Health Conditions:
In response to the evolving nature of acute and chronic health conditions affecting school-aged children, CREC maintains a collection of current health information and guidance on its Health Services website. Families are encouraged to visit the site for the most up-to-date information.
Topics include, but are not limited to, asthma, anxiety, hand, foot and mouth disease, and head lice.

Visit the website by clicking here.

General Practice and Procedures Information (cont.)

Screenings:
Vision, hearing and postural screenings are provided at school as mandated by the State of Connecticut (Sections 10-214-1—10-214-5). These screenings help detect issues as early as possible so that interventions may be put in place to avoid or reduce the adverse impact of impairment. The vision screening program is called KidsSight. We will partner with the Lions Club to provide this free of charge service to all our elementary-aged students.

Hearing screenings will be performed by the school nurse annually to all students in grades Kindergarten, 1, 3, 4 and 5.

Postural screenings, done to check for scoliosis, will be performed by the school nurse annually on all girls in 5th grade. All scoliosis screenings will take place with two adults present.

If your child does not pass any of the initial screenings, a second screening will be performed. You will be informed in writing about seeking further evaluation from your health care provider if your child does not pass the screening the 2nd time.

If you do not receive a letter in writing from your child's school, you may assume that your child's screening was normal.

You may choose refusal of any of the above-mentioned screenings for your child by providing a written and signed statement indicating that you do not want the school to provide the mandated screenings for your child for this given year and returning it to the school nurse. This must be done every school year.

Medications in school:
"*Authorization for the Administration of Medicine by School Personnel*" form: must be filled out and signed by an authorized health care provider, the parent or guardian and provided to the school for your child to receive medication while at school. This includes over the counter medication as well as prescribed medication. This CT state form can be obtained from your healthcare provider or the nurse at your child's school.

<u>It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to administer all morning medications at home prior to the students arrival at school. Exceptions will be granted only in rare and clearly justified circumstances.</u>

All medications (prescription and nonprescription) must be delivered to the school by a parent or guardian. It cannot be transported on the bus. All medications must be in the original, unopened container with the child's name marked clearly on it. The pharmacy label must be intact on all prescription medications.

Skin Lotion: unscented lotion is available in health office. Other topical ointments /lotions require an authorization from a health care provider.

Students are not permitted to self-medicate or self-carry medications at school unless a healthcare provider has completed the required authorization, and the school nurse has reviewed and approved the self-carry request. The school nurse has final approval. If the nurse has not signed off on the self-carry portion of the order, the student may not self-carry the medication. Only inhalers and epinephrine delivery devices are eligible for self-carry approval.

Students may not take over-the-counter medications at school unless the required authorization form is completed, and the medication is stored and administered through the Health Office. Any medication found on a student without prior authorization will be confiscated and held for parent pickup. Medications not retrieved within two weeks will be disposed of.

General Practice and Procedures Information (cont.)

Nebulizers:
Nebulizers are not permitted for use in school due to infection control and safety concerns, as they generate aerosols that can increase the spread of respiratory illnesses. The CDC recommends the use of metered-dose inhalers with spacers, which are equally effective for delivering asthma medication when used correctly and do not create aerosol exposure. If a student requires around-the-clock nebulizer treatments, they are considered too ill to attend school and should remain at home. Students may attend school and receive asthma medication via inhaler, in accordance with their Asthma Action Plan or sick plan, as ordered by their healthcare provider and deemed appropriate by the school nurse.

Field Trips and Medication:
Students with a medical condition that requires emergency rescue medication (such as seizures, asthma, or food allergies) must have a completed *Authorization for the Administration of Medication by School Personnel* form on file with the Nurse's Office, along with the required medication, to participate in any school-sponsored field trip.

Re-Entry After Medical Absence:
Students returning after an extended medical or behavioral health absences or hospitalizations are required to have a re-entry meeting with the school nurse and appropriate staff to review medical needs, updated provider orders, accommodations, transportation, and safety planning before resuming full participation in school activities.

Epinephrine for Anaphylaxis:
Legislation in Connecticut allows the nurse (APRN, RN, LPN) or appropriately trained staff to administer treatment (epinephrine) to any student that is observed to be having an allergic reaction while at school.

Anaphylaxis is a serious and life-threatening allergic reaction. Common causes are food, medication and insect bites or stings. Typical symptoms include an itchy rash, throat swelling and low blood pressure. Abdominal, cardiac and respiratory symptoms can also occur. Anaphylaxis usually has a rapid onset, and immediate treatment is necessary to avoid death. An allergic reaction can occur to any student at any time.

The medication epinephrine is the treatment of choice for anaphylaxis and has no contraindications. Minor side effects may include tremors, headache, palpitations or temporary anxiety. It is a safe, life- saving treatment. Students who receive epinephrine are transported to the hospital via an ambulance so that they can be monitored and evaluated for adjunct treatment due to the possibility of biphasic anaphylaxis (a 2nd reaction).

Parents may "opt-out" of this life-saving treatment. If you do not wish for epinephrine to be administered to your child, should he/she be experiencing symptoms of anaphylaxis, you must submit a letter requesting this to the school. Emergency medical services will still be called for your child in this case.

General Practice and Procedures Information (cont.)

Diapering:
CREC recognizes that children develop at different rates and that some students may require diapering or toileting assistance while attending school. Diapering and hygiene assistance are considered activities of daily living and are provided in a manner that prioritizes student dignity, safety, health, and privacy.

Students who require diapers or pull-ups may be checked for wetness or soiling upon arrival to the classroom and at regular intervals throughout the school day. Diapers or soiled clothing will be changed promptly as needed. All diapering and hygiene assistance occurs only in designated changing areas that are appropriately equipped, regularly cleaned, and separated from food preparation or instructional spaces. For the safety of both students and staff, best practices are followed during diapering and toileting, including maintaining appropriate supervision and visibility while preserving student privacy.

Families are responsible for providing child-specific supplies, including diapers or pull-ups, wipes, and a change of clothing. **If a student requires the use of diaper cream or any barrier ointment, a standing order must be signed yearly.** Barrier ointment must be provided by the parent.

Soiled disposable materials are discarded in closed, hands-free containers that are inaccessible to children. Any soiled student items will be sent home, in a sealed bag, the same day for laundering. Staff follow strict hand hygiene and cleaning protocols before and after each diapering or toileting task to reduce the spread of germs and maintain a healthy school environment.

CREC is committed to supporting students' physical needs while maintaining a respectful, sanitary, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for all children.

Food Policies in CREC Schools

All CREC schools are nut sensitive.

In every CREC school there are students that have nut allergies; some of these allergies are very severe and life-threatening. These reactions require serious medical intervention.

Our goal is to reduce the presence of nuts and tree nuts in our schools. It is our intention to be proactive and to prevent incidences of anaphylactic shock whenever possible.

We ask that parents do the following to help us ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

- Discuss nut allergies with your children. Discuss with your children the potential dangers of sharing or exchanging food with other children.
- Consider refraining from sending anything with containing nuts into the school.
- Read labels carefully on all food products brought into school. Products that say, "may contain peanuts or tree nuts" or similar language should be avoided whenever possible.
- Group snacks at that are intended to be shared with students must be on the CREC Approved Snack List. Some brands are listed specifically because they do not contain certain allergens. All snacks to be shared must be in the original, sealed container with the label intact.
    - Click here for the CREC Approved Snack List

Please contact the nurse at your school for further information regarding the nut-sensitive protocols and food policies that are in place at your child's school.

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Contact Us

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