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New Hampshire School Nurses' Association

School Nurse Protocol for COVID-19 Pandemic Distance Learning Phase Updated 4/5/20

This “sample” protocol is being posted to assist school nurses with planning. It is not a substitute for nursing judgment and does not dictate an exclusive course of action. State and district laws and policies must be followed.

While our students are home and Distance Learning, school nurses can be supportive in several ways.

If your staff plans to come in and out of the school building, post a sign asking any teacher or staff person not to enter if:

- They have any respiratory symptoms such as sore throat, congestion, fever, dry cough, or GI symptoms
- If they have traveled to high risk areas internationally or domestically within the past 2 weeks
- If they have been exposed to a person who has tested positive to COVID-19 within the past 2 weeks
- If they have been exposed to a person who has COVID-19 symptoms and has not been tested, within the past 2 weeks.

Ask them to wash their hands and use hand sanitizer after they enter the building. It is helpful to have hand sanitizer available for use, if possible.

Consider weekly email communication with your school community that would include updated information from the Department of Health and Human Services, and the CDC. Remind families that there may be misinformation in the media, as well as scams, and to utilize the CDC and DHHS as the most reliable and accurate resources.

Stay in touch with your students who may need to hear from you, such as your students with chronic health needs.

Be available by email or phone to answer questions and to provide support if needed. Consider establishing “office hours”.

In your communication, continue to educate families on ***Prevention:***

- Stay home, except to shop for food, medical supplies, or if you are an essential employee [Essential Business List in NH](#)
- Social distancing- maintaining a distance of 6-8 feet from any person outside of your home.

- Cleaning of surfaces, including counters, bathroom surfaces, doorknobs, railings.
- Handwashing - with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, frequently, but particularly when you arrive home and before you eat.
- Hand sanitizer if they have some
- Keep hands off your face
- Avoiding gatherings of more than 10 people (current Federal rule)

Recent studies show that there can be pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic transmission of COVID-19. **Provide Information on CDC Guidance for the use of non-medical fabric face masks** as an additional voluntary measure in public areas where social distancing is hard to maintain, such as in the grocery store or pharmacy [CDC recommendation on face masks](#).

- [how to make a face mask out of a bandana](#)
- [making a facemask from other fabrics](#)
- [How to sew a face mask](#)

Educate families on hygiene measures for using a fabric face mask [handling of cloth face masks](#):

- Don't touch your face when removing mask
- remove mask from the ear straps and place it in a bag
- wash hands,
- wash mask every time it is used

Ask families to observe the following guidelines from NHDHHS:

Self-Quarantine: If you are NOT showing signs of illness but have been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person, or a presumed positive infected person, stay at home for 14 days. Self-Quarantine if you have traveled to any of the high-risk areas domestically or internationally within the last two weeks. Contact your health provider to let them know your status.

[DHHS Self Quarantine Guide](#)

Self-Isolation: If you think you have COVID-19 infection (you have symptoms), you should self-isolate at home. Most symptoms are mild and can spread out over a 2-week period. If symptoms worsen: increasing fever, cough and shortness of breath, call your health care provider immediately, or 911 if severe.

- Stay home
- Let your physician know you are ill and are self-isolating
- Keep away from other people in the house as much as possible, at least 6-8 feet apart
- Use a separate bathroom if possible. Disinfect surfaces touched such as doorknobs, light switches, railings, toilet handle.
- If possible, stay in a separate room from others.
- Continue to practice general hygiene measures such as covering cough and sneeze. Washing hands and using hand sanitizer.

People who have mild symptoms are not being tested, unless directed otherwise by their physician. Most people can be managed at home, much as they would be managed if they had the flu. Reasons they can't test everyone are:

- Showing up for testing potentially exposes the public, healthcare workers, and vulnerable persons to COVID-19.
- We must preserve our limited personal protective equipment (such as masks and gowns (we are in short supply across the nation) as well as specimen collection supplies for our healthcare system to be able to care for patients who develop severe COVID-19 illness over the coming months of this pandemic.
- Confirming infection for every person does not change how most people's illness is managed.

Provide the following links to your school community on Home Management for COVID-19 illness:

- [Caring for Yourself at Home](#),
- [Preventing Spread of COVID at Home](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection Guidance](#)

Instructions on when to discontinue self-isolation after being ill:

- Self-isolate until 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
AND
- At least 72 hours (3 days) have passed *since recovery*, which is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medication *and* improvement in respiratory symptoms.

Expect a time frame of about 2 weeks. [CDC 7 Day/72 Hour Guide](#)

Encourage your families to practice Self-Care during this time of physical spacing and isolation, and check in with staff or students who you are concerned about. Remind families that as the acceleration phase of the virus continues in New Hampshire, they will begin to have friends who become ill, and it is likely they will know someone who is hospitalized. Encourage them to keep their minds and bodies healthy as well as monitor those around them who may be struggling and need support. Provide the following guide to your families and staff for tips on Self-care. [Healthy Habits for Living](#)

Have a Grief Counseling Plan in place for potential loss in the community.

Below are ***useful links*** to share with your families, as resources for COVID-19 information.

[FAQ from CDC](#)

[NH Stay at Home Order](#)

[How to prepare for possible illness](#)

[Symptoms to watch for](#)

[NH DHHS Hotline with COVID 19 questions](#)

[Managing stress and anxiety around Covid-19](#)

[Talking with Children about COVID 19](#)

[More information from NH DHHS](#)

[Family Tool Kit on Corona Virus](#)

[Keeping Peace While Homeschooling Elementary Aged Children](#)

[COVID 1:1 Parenting](#)

[Child Care Resources](#)

[Resources for Vermont Families](#)

[NH Childcare Financial Assistance Benefits](#)

[Vermont Childcare Financial Assistance Benefits](#)

[Relax and Unwind Center for your children](#)

[Resources for Managing Stress for Parents and Children](#)