



New Hampshire  
School Nurses' Association  
Leading ~ Advocating ~ Educating

### School Nurse Protocol for COVID-19 Pandemic Distance Learning Phase 3/21/20

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 a number of 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 congestion, fever, dry cough, or GI symptoms
- If they have traveled to high risk areas internationally or domestically with 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 regularly updated information from the Department of Health and Human Services, and the CDC.

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 methods**:

- Stay home, except to shop for food, medical supplies, or if you are an essential employee
- 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)

**Ask families to observe the following guidelines from NHDHHS:**

**Self-Quarantine:** is for people who are NOT symptomatic (not sick) but who have come into contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 *OR*, had contact with a person with COVID-19 symptoms who has not been tested because of mild symptoms. People who have traveled to any of the high-risk areas domestically or internationally within the last two weeks should also self-quarantine.

- Stay home and out of the public for 14 days after your last contact with the person who has assumed COVID-19 infection, or since your last day of travel. If you do not develop symptoms, it is fine to return to social distancing after 14 days.
- If you develop symptoms of fever, dry cough, congestion, GI upset, Self-Isolate and contact your health care provider.

**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 12 day 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.

**Physicians are being directed to not test patients who report mild respiratory symptoms. Most people can be managed at home without testing, much as you would be managed if you 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.

**In short, call your physician if you are sick and as long as your symptoms are mild, expect to be told to self-isolate.**

***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.

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

[How to prepare for possible illness](#)

[Symptoms to watch for](#)

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

[what to do if you are sick with COVID-19](#)

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

[Talking with Children about COVID 19](#)

[More information from NH DHHS](#)