



Presidents Letter September 2019

Welcome back New Hampshire school nurses to the 2019-2020 school year! We are all working hard to update student immunization records, get emergency action plans in place, establish Individual health and 504 plans for students with chronic health needs in school, plan for health classes, and review health and safety protocols for your school communities. This is only a small part of the independent school nurse role within the academic setting.

Many school nurses work year round, while others cover hospital shifts, work in summer camps, or they use the summer months to prepare for the new school year by attending continuing education opportunities. Eight NHSNA Board members attended the National School Nurse Conference in Denver, Colorado in July. If you have never attended a national level conference, we highly recommend it. Joining with nurses across the country to learn and advocate for our profession is inspiring! We returned with new information and fresh energy to bring back to our school health offices for the 2019-20 school year.

The NHSNA Board has worked hard this year to collaborate with other organizations to support the health and safety of children in NH. For example, we are supporting legislative efforts to curb student vaping, and we are working with the NH Medical Society, our state immunization nurses, and Keene State College to collaborate on a marketing project to enhance immunization compliance. This is an important topic as we continue to face a Measles outbreak in the United States. Families who choose not to vaccinate their children make decisions based on misinformation, rather than on evidence-based research. We hope to clarify valid information as well as inform parents and teens on best immunization practices.

We are actively preparing for our fall continuing education programs:

- We recently held our “sold out” panel on Legal issues in school nursing. The popularity of this program is a testament to the need for a school nurse consultant, an administrative resource in our state. Many thanks to our experienced panelists who answered many challenging questions from school nurses in the audience.
- Our fall *Essentials* program, scheduled at the Audubon in Concord on November 8 and 9, will provide education on the “nuts and bolts” of school nursing for nurses who are new to their role, and to current school nurses hoping to brush up on updated information.
- Our annual Fall Meeting will be held on the evening of November 8, within the two-day schedule of our *Essentials* program. Please join us for *Essentials* and

our Fall Meeting- these will be an excellent opportunities for school nurses to collaborate and socialize outside of our health offices.

The National Association of School Nurses is beginning a second collection of DATA from school nurses across the country on chronic health needs in school. The statistics will help to communicate the amount of care that is needed in schools by school nurses. NHSNA will coordinate efforts in New Hampshire by school nurses, who will communicate DATA from New Hampshire schools directly to NASN.

These are just a few of the efforts taking place in our state school nurse organization. What is your special skill and how can you give back to nursing in a way that will enhance your practice as well as the practice of others? Can you serve as a mentor, or spend some time on a special project committee? Would you be willing to join advocacy efforts for school nursing, either by communicating what we do in our role to other professionals, or by showing up at the legislature in Concord to speak out about important health care issues?

If you take some time to give back, you strengthen our profession as a whole.

Together, we are a larger voice with a clearer message.

Sincerely,

Kathy Barth, BSN, RN, NCSN
President NHSNA