

Sponsorship of School-Based Health Centers

The sponsoring agency of a SBHC should be locally suited and fiscally viable to administer and operate a health center serving the needs of students. Nationally, most SBHCs are run by a community health care center or a hospital. In some cases a local school district manages and sponsors a SBHC. A health care agency must have a Memorandum of Understanding with the host school board. Meetings between the health care agency and the school should be held regularly.

Scope of Services

The scope of service of a SBHC includes:

- primary care
- behavioral healthcare
- case management
- dropout prevention and
- coordination of health promotion activities for the school community.

Staffing

Licensed clinical providers for general health care and behavioral health care need to be hired. Generally, a nurse practitioner or physician assistant is responsible for general medical care. Licensed social workers provide behavioral health services.

Billing for Services

Some but not all of the services provided in the school-based health center are billable to Medicaid and other insurance organizations. Medical billing is a complex process that requires both infrastructure support and detailed technical knowledge of the field. All SBHC should develop the capacity to assist eligible families in securing Medicaid Managed Care coverage. Level III SBHCs are expected to develop the capacity to bill for the services they provide.

Standards and Quality Assurance

SBHCs must follow national clinical laboratory standards, comply with pharmacy regulations and have detailed quality assurance plans in place.

Outline of Responsibilities:

Community Health Center Sponsorship

Community Health Centers leverage federal, state, and private funds to provide cost effective and culturally competent health care to underserved areas and populations. Community Health Centers promote access by providing care to all regardless of the ability to pay.

The model below assumes that the community health center is the sponsor and takes most of the responsibility for creating and managing the SBHC. However, the community health center can't do this in isolation. There must be a point person designated within the school administration who takes responsibility for maintaining open communication and dialog with the community health center. Key to a successful SBHC is the communication between the school and sponsoring agency staff – it must be open, formalized and frequent.

Operations	Community health center	School District
Providing staff	Hire and train staff	Orient staff to work in school environment
Provide physical space for SBHC	Advise about space requirements	School
Re-model clinic facility	Assist with design and required features	Remodel school classroom to meet SBHC standards

Establish school health advisory committee (SHAC)	Participate on the SHAC	Bring SHAC participants together. Provide leadership and continuity
Provide funding for SBHC	Billing receipts contribute to SBHC budget	School district contracts with community health care clinic to run SBHC. Uses funds from Gov's initiative
Contracts with Medicaid managed care organizations	Community health center	
Bills for services	Community health center	
Ensures staff are credentialed	Community health center	
Communication with parents about the SBHC	Community health center coordinates with the school to inform parents about registration and permission forms	School assistance at time of registration.
Establish CLIA waiver and procedures (lab tests)	Community health center	
Establish pharmacy procedures and license as appropriate	Community health center	
Work with Public Health to establish MOU for vaccines, Title X , HIV, Infectious Disease programs, as needed	Community health center	
Collect data on clinical encounters and report to DOH and school district	Community health center	
Follow clinical guidelines for SBHC	Community health center	
Communicate regularly between school administration and SBHC	Community health center	School
Annual reports to school board	Assist school with data from SBHC	School
Develop weekly case conference	The weekly case conference is essential for coordinated care between the school and health care providers.	School staff meet weekly with health care providers to coordinate care and refer patients to the SBHC or to discuss on-going issues.
HIPPA/confidentiality procedure	Provide explanation to parents and students. Comply with federal and state regulations	
Insurance/liability	Provide liability coverage for providers and staff through the Federal Tort Claims Act	

School District Sponsorship

Some school districts opt to run their own school-based health centers, contracting with outside providers for their services. In this model the school district takes on all the responsibility and operations as above. The district contracts with community providers to come in and serve students during pre-determined hours during the week. Some of the pros and cons of this model are:

Pro	Con
School has greater control of the SBHC	School has greater responsibility for running the SBHC
School hires and supervises staff directly	School responsible for hiring staff – if this is a part-time position it may be difficult to fill. A community agency may be more successful at hiring staff who will work part time for the SBHC
School contracts with managed care organizations to get reimbursement for services	School does not have experience with this kind of contracting
School bills for medical and behavioral health services	Medical billing is complicated and requires special expertise
School meets CLIA standards	Lack of familiarity with regulations and no experience with laboratory testing
School meets pharmacy regulations and Department of Health standards	Lack of familiarity with regulations and lack of knowledge base for general requirements.
School fiscally responsible for SBHC	SBHC may consume more resources than are available
School keeps all medical records	Regulatory environment is complicated by FERPA and HIPAA. It is not clear if schools can ensure confidentiality of student health records.
School maintains primary accountability for clinical services	School lacks resources to provide medical oversight for providers operating under contract. Complaints are directed to school administration.
School provides liability coverage for SBHC clinical providers	Costs of liability insurance may increase and affect overall budget.