STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

MONITORING REPORT 2019-20

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PROFILE

The purpose of SSD Health Services is to provide safe and effective nursing care that allows students to attend school in the least restrictive environment. Services are delivered through:
- Individualized Nursing Services
- SSD school-based health offices (including a Nurse Practitioner-run clinic at North Technical School)
- Telehealth services

RESOURCES

STAFF:
As of May 2019, SSD required 63 nursing FTE nursing positions across:
- SSD separate schools,
- Technical high schools,
- VSP sites,
- Partner districts, and
- Early Childhood Education sites

In addition, the program requires 25 substitute nurses (as a ratio of FTE nursing positions required).

BUDGET (FY20):
- Non-certified salaries: $4,240,836
- Employee benefits: $1,346,250
- Purchased services: $325,439
- Supplies/Capital Outlay: $32,650
- Total: $5,945,175

RESPONSIBILITY OF:
Director of Student Services

EVALUATION & RESEARCH RECOMMENDATION: CONTINUE TO MONITOR USING SAME METRICS AND SCHEDULE.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The program did not meet its target of having all required FTE nursing positions filled. However, they were within range (≤ 0.04) of their 1.0 ratio target from December 2018 to May 2019. Since that time, the main challenge faced in hiring and retaining staff (i.e., non-competitive nursing salaries) has been addressed, leaving administrators hopeful in satisfying their staffing requirements going forward.

- Staffing challenges also extend to the nursing substitute pool. The target of a ratio of 0.4 or above of the size of the substitute nursing pool as compared to the FTE nursing positions required was well under target, averaging 0.19. Nevertheless, this ratio has improved over the February-May 2018 average of 0.13.

- Naturally, nursing staff shortages negatively affect attendance rates for students requiring more intensive health supports at school. However, approximately 59% of the 37.5 days of absence incurred in connection to student health services were due to parents declining the use of substitutes/agency nurses.

- In an effort to support retention by helping prepare new nurses for their role at SSD, the Program committed to providing all their new hires with orientation during the first 30 days of working with students. Ultimately, this goal was achieved with nine of the 10 new hires who stayed on with SSD for this initial period.

ACTION PLAN

The program has completed 5 action plans and is on-schedule with their one remaining plan targeted at the implementation of telehealth services in SSD schools.

NEW ACTION PLAN: Monitor the impact of nurse recruitment/retention levels following the instatement of the wage increase.
SUPPORTING RESULTS DATA

Staffing was slightly more challenging for the Student Health Services Program in 2018-19 than the year prior (average: 0.95 vs. 0.97), particularly within the substitute nurse category (average: 0.19 vs. 0.21).

In total, students were required to miss 37.5 days of instruction due to SSD care provider availability, far exceeding the target of zero instances. That is a significant increase from 2017-18 where 7 days were classified as missed due to forced absence. The breakdown of days missed in the current review period by reason provided is as follows:

- Parent declined alternative arrangements: 22
- No nurse available: 15
- Nurse sick call: 0.5

59% of forced absences were decided at the parental level.

Nine out of 10 new nursing hires met the target of receiving orientation within their first 30 workdays. (*Last year’s measure was calculated based on calendar days and therefore is not comparable.)

90% of nurse hires received orientation within their first 30 workdays.