



# Community Health Nurses working with primary schools

## Who are the Community Health Nurses?

School Health Services are delivered in public and private primary schools and district high schools across Western Australia. The Community Health Nurses who deliver the services, are employed by WA Country Health Services or Child and Adolescent Health Service (in metropolitan Perth). Teams of Community Health Nurses provide services in local primary schools.

## Community Health Services in Primary Schools

Community Health Nurses are primarily involved in early detection of health concerns and promotion of health and wellbeing for children and their families. They may provide;

- Information, advocacy and support for children and their parents to make informed decisions about health, wellbeing and development.
- Health and development assessments.
- Referral to other health services for further assessment, diagnosis, treatment or therapy.
- Parenting advice and parenting programs (eg Triple P).
- Support for teachers to provide health education in the classroom.
- Support for student health and wellbeing programs (eg healthy eating).
- Support for school health promotion initiatives.
- Facilitation of professional development for teachers to ensure schools can care for children with particular health needs, e.g., asthma or anaphylaxis.
- Assistance for school staff and parents to develop health care plans for students with special needs (eg chronic disease; physical disability or other complex health conditions).

A School Level Agreement is negotiated between the School Health Nurse and/or the Nurse Manager and the Principal to guide service delivery at individual schools.

## As a *general rule* Community Health Nurses

- Do not provide minor first aid (the school is responsible for this).
- Do not administer medication.
- Do not conduct invasive physical examinations.
- Do not conduct checks for head lice.
- Do not undertake long term interventions about psychological, relationship or educational problems.

# School Entry Health Assessments

Community Health Nurses endeavour to conduct a **School Entry Health Assessment (SEHA)** for every child during the first year of school – usually kindergarten. This universal screening program aims to detect problems with hearing, vision, oral health, growth, development, and any other health and wellbeing issues which are of concern for parents or teachers. These assessments are usually conducted within school hours and require parent/caregiver consent.

Activity	Details	Timeframe
Information gathering	A health assessment form is sent to parents (via the school) to provide information about the SEHA, seek their consent to conduct the assessments, collect relevant health history and provides an opportunity to identify concerns	Term 1
Prioritising	Community Health Nurses review parental responses from the health assessment forms and regularly liaise with teachers to appropriately prioritise children.	Term 1-3
Assessment	<p>Screening tests are not comprehensive assessments, but highlight issues which may need further assessment and/or treatment. The tests are non-invasive and quickly applied. They include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision screening</li> <li>• Hearing and ear health screening</li> <li>• Body Mass Index (BMI) including height and weight</li> <li>• Oral health</li> <li>• Developmental screening includes a 'first level screen' using a parent and teacher observations.</li> </ul> <p>Nurses communicate results with parents and work with them to provide information and support and link them to other health providers, as required.</p>	Term 2-4
Follow-up and liaison	Community Health Nurses liaise with parents to empower, support and follow-up with care and referral if required. With parent consent, Community Health Nurses liaise with teachers and school staff on matters of child health, development and wellbeing.	Ongoing
Referrals	Community Health Nurses refer clients to a range of providers for further assessment and treatment, most commonly to general practitioners and child development services. With parent consent, referrals can be done collaboratively with the classroom teacher.	Ongoing

## CONTACT DETAILS

Community Health Nurse

WACHS/Child and Adolescent Health Service

phone: