



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

School Nurse/Nurse Leader and Public Health Nurse Coordination Meeting Notes 10/30/20

Public Health Nurses attending from: Greenfield, 15 towns of CPHS Health District

School Nurses attending from: Gill/Montague, Frontier, Mahar, Union 28, Four Rivers, Shutesbury, FCTS, Greenfield, The Center School, The Academy at Charlemont.

Resources shared:

- Risk Assessment and Testing Protocols for Reducing...
https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Risk-Assessment-and-Testing-Protocols-for-Reducing-SARS-CoV-2-Transmission-in-K-12-Schools_FINAL.pdf
- COVID Home Testing Kits: <https://www.pixel.labcorp.com/at-home-test-kits/covid-19-test>
- FFCRA link: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employer-paid-leave>

Discussion Topics on 10/30:

- Each district updated the others on how it is going and the current status of the school in terms of learning modality. Many indicated when their school committee intends to reconsider the modality issue, and a few reported on results of local surveys of students, parents and staff on the topic. A clashing of opinions between parents and staff is being felt in at least one community.
- Changing status of towns on state map, notably Buckland, which is currently red -- but anticipates a return to grey next week.
- The increase, since March, of students across the commonwealth who are struggling academically
- The significant anxiety experienced by members of the staff, regarding issues such as
 - the presence of non-mask-wearing students
 - safety and location of indoor eating
 - procedures regarding the removal of symptomatic students – and potentially all of their classmates -- from the classroom, the cleaning thereof, and communication between teachers and the custodial staff regarding who is cleaning what, and how often
 - policies regarding staff illness
- Communication with the parents of athletes when a team is quarantined following potential exposure; should it be the principal, school nurse, coach or some combination of these that initiates contact?
- COVID-19 test types and their administration and reporting: which tests are being given by various healthcare establishments; which test should be given to staff; the relative efficacy of post and anterior nasal swabs; self-administration of tests; the idea that rapid antigen testing could jump-start contact

tracing; etc. One nurse called Walgreens pharmacy for clarification regarding the type of test administered to a student.

- The Community Health Center of Franklin County will soon be running a mobile testing program for schools, and currently anticipates a 2-week turnaround time for test results. One nurse is awaiting information regarding what criteria would initiate the dispatch of the mobile testing unit.
- The low rate of incidence and transmission in schools: there have been only 200 student cases in 371 MA schools; and with the exception of two probable incidences of transmission via team sports participation, there have been no cases of school transmission in Franklin County.
- Confusion regarding the metrics of identifying a contact using the time of the onset of symptoms and the time of testing. If the diagnosed patient had no symptoms prior to being tested, those they interacted with during the 48 hours prior to test administration are potential contacts (for whom the duration of interaction will then be considered). If the diagnosed patient was symptomatic, those they interacted with during the 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms are potential contacts (for whom the duration of interaction will then be considered). Also difficult to understand is that the risk of contracting COVID-19 from exposure to a positive patient outside of those 48-hour windows is very low.
- The difficulty many people have understanding that two negative tests do not enable an individual to come out of quarantine – especially in relation to travel restrictions, which *are* rescinded after two negative test results. Should schools be more or less strict than the state's travel advisory, which does not require children under 10 to quarantine if the adult(s) they traveled with test negative.
- The lack of quarantine restrictions on the same-classroom sibling of a student who tests positive, and to household members of a symptomatic individual awaiting test results.
- The difficulty of being involved in school personnel functions:
 - When is a staff member eligible for FFCRA paid leave?
 - What is the responsibility of determining the above of the school nurse in relation to the staff member's PCP?
 - Should a staff member be paid for time quarantining at the suggestion of child's pediatrician, but not required to do so by the school administration?
- The mechanics of collecting influenza vaccine verification forms and/or attestation
- Teaching modalities following the Thanksgiving and winter breaks; should there be a two-week remote instruction only period following each? Should BOHs make this determination?

There are several forms of absences and accommodations related to the FFCRA and Covid-19:

- Employees may wish to request accommodations be made to their existing position per the federal American Disabilities Act (ADA). To be eligible to receive workplace reasonable accommodations under the federal ADA, an individual must have an "actual" or a "record of disability" as defined by the ADA Amendments Act. Reasonable accommodations may be made for employees who are considered [high risk per the CDC guidelines regarding Coronavirus](#).
- Employees may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) based on the following qualifications:
 - Is subject to a federal, state, or local government quarantine or isolation order;
 - Has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine;
 - Is experiencing symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
 - Is caring for an individual who is subject to a Federal, State, or local government quarantine/isolation order or has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine,

- Is caring for their minor child whose school/daycare is closed or childcare provider is unavailable, or
 - Is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Employees may be eligible for Extended Family Medical Leave Act (EFMLA) benefits if the leave is to care for a minor child whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19