Selection of an Electronic Documentation System for School Health

Health documentation supports legal requirements, provides a historical record of care, facilitates care team communication, develops aggregated reports of student needs, supports care planning and delegation, and describes emergency care planning. An electronic document system can help a school nurse manage and use data in a quick, efficient manner. Reports generated from electronic documentation systems allow the nurse to:

- Efficiently describe health room activity
- Develop evidence for practice
- Describe nursing sensitive student outcomes
- Analyze population health
- Evaluate the effectiveness of care delivery
- Manage appropriate resource allocation
- Describe student health needs
- Link health interventions and educational outcomes

Electronic information systems allow a huge volume of data to be entered rapidly, analyzed comprehensively from multiple perspectives, and efficiently reported to key stakeholders.

Currently there are three types of school health software:
- Commercial school health programs (only contain health data and do not usually interface with instruction or school district level records, although may be able to download certadata from student information system)
- General school wide student information systems (may include transportation, discipline, instruction, schedules, standardized test scores as well as student health data)
- District specific software (created in-house by a School District)

Administrators, Information technology professionals, and school nurses must take responsibility for assuring that health documentation requirements are met in their documentation system.

Areas to analyze before purchasing an electronic documentation system include:
- Security, Confidentiality, and Privacy
  - Is the data secure? Can only those who need to access it?
  - Your district attorney and/or privacy officer should review any software contracts that have a web-based platform to have a clear understanding how much control the company has over the data once it is in the cloud.
  - Does the system meet district privacy standards/guidelines?

- - Is system HIPAA and FERPA compliant: https://www.nasn.org/nasn/nasn-resources/professional-topics/school-health-documentation/hipaa-ferpa
  - Authentication
  - Overwrite protection
  - Audit capability
  - Partitioning
- Ethical use of school health data
  - Who owns the data in the EHR? Does it remain with parents/district?
  - With whom will the vendor be sharing de-identified aggregated data?
  - Refer to the National Center for Education Statistics and DOE PTAC for guidelines
- Nursing workflows in the school health office
- Communication with school staff; parents; education community (district, state, national levels)
- Communication with the health community
  - Health care provider orders, treatment and response data
  - Student health records with nurse documentation and data back to provider
- The state standards of nursing practice
- Practice models
  - Use of unlicensed personnel, full and/or part time staff, substitutes (each should have individual log in and password)
- Ability to run queries / reports
  - Step Up & Be Counted!
  - Other data needed for school / district monthly and year-end reports

**School nurses are key members of the education team and leaders
of school health who collect valuable data through their documentation;
and who use data to keep students healthy, safe, and ready to learn.**