Starting a School-Based Health Center in an Illinois School

Establishing a school health center (SHC) in an Illinois community requires commitment, time, resources, and collaboration between the school, community and provider of services. The process of starting a SHC includes a pre-planning, planning, and implementation stage. It is imperative that you establish contact with the appropriate resources in Illinois as you begin the journey of starting a SHC. This document will provide you with recommendations to consider during each stage of your planning process along with the appropriate local, state and national resources. A checklist is listed below which provides recommended items for you to consider. The order of the items may vary with individual circumstances but your goal should be to check off each of the items as they relate to your planning process. You can click on each item for further explanation and resources. Good luck in your journey!

CHECKLIST

PRE-PLANNING STAGE

☐ Educate yourself about SHCs
☐ Engage your school and school district
☐ Form a community advisory committee
☐ Conduct a needs assessment of your school community
☐ Identify the site
☐ Identify a medical provider who will be the lead agency
☐ Engage the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) school health consultant

PLANNING STAGE

☐ Build collaboration and buy-in
☐ Develop operational model
☐ Develop plan for electronic health record implementation
☐ Secure funding and plan for build out
☐ Work with the Illinois Department of Public Health to insure that standards will be met
☐ Work with your school district to develop a site license agreement if needed

LAUNCH STAGE

☐ Finalize the operational model
☐ Build collaboration and buy-in
☐ Finalize site license agreement with your school district if needed
☐ Build out facility
☐ Recruit and hire staff
☐ Develop policy and procedure manual
☐ Schedule Illinois Department of Public Health walk through
☐ Apply to the Illinois Medical Assistance Program
☐ Develop plan for evaluation of services

EXPLANATION AND RESOURCES
PRE-PLANNING STAGE

☐ **Educate** yourself about SHCs
  - Resources include:
    - **Illinois Department of Public Health**, Victoria Jackson, School Health Administrator, 217-785-5368, victoria.jackson@illinois.gov
    - **Illinois School-Based Health Alliance**, Heidi Ortolaza-Alvear, Project Director, 312-491-8161, hortolaza-alvear@everthriveil.org, www.everthriveil.org
    - **National School-Based Health Alliance**, http://www.sbh4all.org/
    - **Illinois Administrative Code for School Health Centers**
      http://ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/077/07702200sections.html
    - **Handbook For Providers of School Based/Linked Health Center Services**, Chapter S-200
    - **CDC Systematic Review of SHC Impact**: http://thecommunityguide.org/healthequity/education/schoolbasedhealthcenters.html
    - **SHC Research Database**: http://everthriveil.org/resources/shcadolescent-health-research-database
    - **Core Competencies**: http://www.sbh4all.org/resources/core-competencies/

☐ **Engage** your school/school district
  - Identify individuals in your school/school district who will help you champion the SHC model
  - Educate these potential champions on the benefits of SHCs
  - For more information on your school, go to http://www.isbe.state.il.us/school_info1.htm
  - For more information on your school district go to http://www.greatschools.org/schools/districts/Illinois/IL

☐ **Form a community advisory committee**
  - Members should include students, parents, staff, school administrators, community medical and behavioral health providers and other key stakeholders. A list of additional recommended members can be found in the **Illinois Administrative Code for School Health Centers**
  - Committee will guide the planning and implementation processes
  - Meet monthly during the planning stages

☐ **Conduct a needs assessment** of your school community
  - Include a comprehensive profile of the physical and behavioral health needs of the students and community members
  - Include community resources such as medical and behavioral health providers
  - Include level of stakeholder interest

☐ **Identify the site**
  - The school should be selected based on the results of the community needs assessment and stakeholder interest
  - The principal is engaged at the beginning of the process
  - It is critical to have an identified individual at the school to be the contact person for the project. Ask the principal to serve as the contact or to designate a contact person

☐ **Identify a medical provider** who will be the lead agency
• Medical partners can be a local hospital, university or federally qualified health center
• If behavioral health services will not be provided by the medical partner, engage a community behavioral health provider
• The medical provider and/or behavioral health provider should meet directly with principal and principal’s designee for the project
• The lead agency must be a medical provider but social service agencies can be a secondary provider
• Identify the electronic health record (EHR) the medical provider is currently using and develop a plan to expand to the SHC. If the lead provider is not currently using an EHR, develop a plan to comply with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Meaningful Use Criteria

□ Engage your school district
  • Contact your school district to begin discussion about your planning process. For more information on your school district go to http://www.greatschools.org/schools/districts/Illinois/IL

□ Engage the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) School Health Consultant
  • IDPH is responsible for certifying health centers and insuring quality assurance. Certification is a symbol of quality that funders and health plans value
  • IDPH is also a funder for SHCs in Illinois and certification is a requirement to receive funding. Although new funding has been limited over the past several years, it is important to begin the certification process as it is a requirement for Chicago Public Schools and will position your SHC in the event new funds become available
  • Determine if your school district requires a site license agreement with the medical provider which may be required for certification by IDPH
  • Refer to the state standards for SHC requirements http://ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/077/07702200sections.html

PLANNING STAGE

□ Build collaboration and buy-in
  • Conduct the community advisory committee on a monthly basis and expand membership to include new stakeholders

□ Develop operational model
  • Work with your medical (and behavioral health) provider and community advisory board to identify the model of SHC that will best meet the needs of the school and/or community
  • Medical services, including acute care, risk assessment, preventative services, and health education must be provided on site
  • It is strongly recommended that behavioral health services be provided on site; however, referral to a community provider may be permissible in some circumstances
  • Dental and case management services may be on site or by referral. Refer to the Illinois Administrative Code for a detailed description of required services http://ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/077/07702200sections.html
  • Look to local, state and national resources to help guide the decision

□ Develop plan for electronic health record (EHR)
  • Identify the electronic health record (EHR) the medical provider is currently using and develop a plan to expand to the SHC. If the lead provider is not currently using an EHR, develop a plan to comply with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Meaningful Use Criteria
Secure **funding** and **plan for build out**
- Start-up costs of a SHC are typically $500,000 - $1M. Operating budgets typically range from $200,000-$400,000
- Possible funding sources can include local, state and national
- Evidence of funding should be presented to your school district prior to initiation of build out
- After funding is secured, the process of building out the space typically takes about a year

Work with **Illinois Department of Public Health** (IDPH) to insure that standards will be met
- Requirements include but are not limited to: 24 hour access to medical services, on site healthcare professional during school hours, use of a risk assessment tool with all patients
- Refer to the state standards for SHC requirements
- A walk-through will be required prior to seeing students

Work with your school district to develop a **site license agreement** if needed
- This agreement between the Board of Education and the sponsoring agency of the SHC may need to be completed prior to the initiation of building out the space and may include the following:
  - Authorization to Establish School Health Center
  - Operations Checklist: Approving Site License Agreement
  - Law Department Checklist for SHC Site License Agreement
  - Community Partnerships
  - Letters of Support from Principal and Local School Council
  - Service Delivery Plan
  - Staffing Plan including an organizational chart
  - Fiscal responsibility plan to sustain the clinic for a minimum of five (5) years
  - Plan to develop Advisory Board
  - Coordination with existing school services and staff
  - Plan to develop Policies and Procedures Manual
  - Quality Assurance plan

**LAUNCH STAGE**

Finalize the **operational model**

Build **collaboration and buy-in**
- Continue to conduct the community advisory committee on a monthly basis and expand membership to include new stakeholders

Finalize **site license agreement** with your school district

Build out **facility**
- Work with your school district and school personnel to arrange for build out
- Schedule an environmental assessment for any renovation, construction or infrastructure upgrade
- Submit any required checklist and supporting materials to your school district
- Progress meetings should be held with school staff, provider staff and other school district staff during the build out stage to ensure project is staying on schedule
- Most build outs happen during the summer months so as to prevent disruption to educational time

Recruit and hire **staff**
- Work with sponsoring agency to recruit and hire staff
• Recommended staffing levels are directly linked to the model of service but typically include a manager, medical director, advanced practice nurse or physician assistant and front desk staff

☐ Develop **policy and procedure** manual
  • A policy and procedure manual is necessary to insure that your SHC is providing quality services and meeting the minimum expectation of the state standards
  • A sample policy and procedure manual is available on the Illinois School-Based Health Alliance website at: [http://everthriveil.org/sites/default/files/resources/attachments/Illinois SHC PP manual FINAL 1 20 12.pdf](http://everthriveil.org/sites/default/files/resources/attachments/Illinois SHC PP manual FINAL 1 20 12.pdf) and is a starting point for your staff to engage in discussion to develop your own manual in collaboration with your sponsoring agency

☐ Schedule Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) **walk through**
  • Continue to work with IDPH to ensure compliance with standards

☐ Apply to the **Illinois Medical Assistance Program**
  • Complete the enrollment form for the Illinois Medical Assistance Program, see [http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/assets/hfs2243.pdf](http://www.hfs.illinois.gov/assets/hfs2243.pdf)

☐ Develop plan for **evaluation** of services
  • An evaluation plan is necessary to ensure that quality services are provided and that the needs of your population are met
  • Contact Illinois Department of Public Health to become familiar with the data collection, reporting and quality improvement requirements