

School Nurse Competencies 3

SNC 3: Professional Management Skills

Criterion 1: Candidates for a School Nurse Services credential demonstrate the ability to use their professional knowledge and skills to promote the overall health of the school community.

Candidates learn that the primary role of the school nurse is to support student learning, and that the school nurse accomplishes this by implementing strategies that promote student and staff health and safety. Candidates learn that promoting the overall health of the school community needs to be done through a well planned coordinated school health program that goes beyond what the school nurse can do alone. To be successful in school nursing, candidate recognizes they must be capable coordinators, collaborators, and good communicators.

In NURS 184, Introduction to School Nursing, candidates learn to promote the overall health of the school community through health promotion and health education, along with modeling a healthy life style. Candidates understand that they must use methods appropriate to the situation and to the client's developmental level, learning needs, readiness, ability to learn, language preference, and culture. Candidates further understand that health teaching must address topics such as healthy lifestyles, risk-reducing behaviors, developmental needs, activities of daily living, and preventive self-care as appropriate to client developmental levels. Required reading for candidates include the CDE (California Department of Education) (2003) *Health Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*, and the CDE (2008) *Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*. Candidates also learn that the overall health of the school community also involves: controlling the spread of communicable disease through vigorously adhering to immunization admission guidelines; excluding children from school with suspected communicable diseases; protecting the medically fragile students from infectious disease through faithfully following universal precautions; carrying out screening programs to detect deviations from the norm; and encouraging a healthy life style that relates to quality nutrition, exercise, and campaigns to rid campuses of unhealthy vending machines and unsafe playground equipment. Candidates also gain insight into sections of the Education Code that relates specifically to promoting overall health of the school community, i.e., communicable disease control, school nutrition programs, physical education requirements, and health education guidelines in public schools.

In NURS 184, Introduction to School Nursing, *Week 5*, candidates gain insight into immunization requirements, school safety, and safe administration of medications at school; in *Week 6*, candidates gain insight into different types of screening programs to detect deviations from the norm; in *Week 7*, dental programs are covered; in *Week 10*, candidates gain insight into the value of research in determining effective teaching methods, requirements for effective

teaching, and curricula that is appropriate for different learners. They are asked to discuss a conceptual model for effective teaching that relates to learner readiness and the school nurse as educator. Candidates are also asked to discuss health promotion and health education for faculty and staff, and steps that the school nurse can take to plan and implement a school-site health and wellness program for faculty and staff, including the development of a survey to determine health education interests. There are also questions related to teaching and program development, one relates to developing an outline the candidate could actually use to teach a faculty/staff Blood Borne Pathogens in-service to faculty and staff; the another asking the candidate to write a proposal for a health education program promoting a healthy lifestyle for overweight preadolescent girls. In NURS 185 (School Nurse Seminar), candidates have an opportunity to respond to a question that relates to planning and organizing a health faire, an excellent way to bring health awareness to the entire school community.

In NURS 186, School Nurse Practicum I; and in NURS 187, School Nurse Practicum II, candidates have the opportunity to put into practice what they have learned in NURS 184 and NURS 185. For example, they learn first-hand through working with a qualified school nurse preceptor about required immunizations, exclusion policies for noncompliance or communicable disease, screening programs, and observe their preceptor as a coordinator, collaborator, and a communicator working with other school professionals, children, and families. With regard to health teaching and health promotion, in NURS 186 (elementary practicum) there is an assignment that requires candidates to determine a health education need among school aged children; then research the subject matter, develop curriculum and a teaching outline, and to present a health lesson in the classroom. In NURS 187 (secondary practicum), candidates have a choice of collaborating with a secondary teacher to incorporate new curriculum into a health unit and then teach it for the first time; or to facilitate a series of small group discussions on health related issue pertinent to that group. Candidates have the option of participating in a project or a leadership role that may involve health promotion, such as a health faire on a school site (an excellent way to involve the entire community), or an in-service for faculty and staff on Blood Borne Pathogens, or presenting a health update at a faculty meeting. Candidates may also choose as a project to work in developing a wellness program for faculty and staff. Candidates also come to realize that they must model a healthy life style in order to encourage others to do the same.

The candidate demonstrates the ability to use their professional knowledge and skills to promote the overall health of the school community.

This is evaluated by clinical instructor through journaling and through direct observation by the preceptor. **See Sec. 3** (p. 396 and p. 401), Preceptor Syllabus checklists #E3-5, #E7-8, #E10-14, #E26, #E29, #E31 (elementary), and #S3, #S11-15, #S31 (secondary). The preceptor must initial the competency and sign the checklist indicating all competencies have been met at the end of semester.

Criterion 2: Candidates advocate appropriately with students, family, community, and others to promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles.

Candidates must complete community health coursework prior to entering the program, as this gives them a global perspective of school nursing as it relates to the surrounding community, since the school population is a reflection of the larger community. Candidates learn that in order to make a difference in the health behaviors and lifestyles of school age children and adolescents, the school nurse must look to both the community and the family for help. Candidates understand that pupils in school, as well as teachers and other members of the school community, must buy into the importance of promoting healthy behaviors and partner with the school nurse to become active participants in health promotion and health education. This understanding is expected to lead the candidate to the realization that the way to accomplish a effective partnership to promote change is through a well planned and coordinated school health program that involves the school nurse, the community, students, and families. In NURS 184, Introduction to School Nursing, *Week 2*, candidates are asked to discuss the eight components of a coordinated school health program and the collaborative steps involved in developing a school health program. In *Week 8*, a question directs candidates to understand that the role of the school nurse cannot be limited to the school building, but must reach out to partners into the community. Another question asks candidates about what is involved in a School Health Index in determining health related needs within the school community. *Week 11* is devoted to the role of the school nurse in health education and health promotion. In NURS 185, School Nurse Seminar, *Week 2*, candidates are asked to respond to a question related to coordinated school health programs at the secondary level.

In NURS 186 and NURS 187 (practicum courses), in class discussion, candidates are asked to discuss the role of the school nurse as advocates with students and parents in achieving a healthier lifestyle. At the secondary level, partnering to advocate for a healthier lifestyle, could mean striving to overcome addiction to substances through partnering with community agencies and programs. Candidates in practicum courses are also required to spent six to eight hours each semester actually out in the community becoming acquainted with relevant community referral agencies, service clubs, and programs that lead to school nurse partnerships in advocating for healthy behaviors and healthier life styles for children and families, i.e., the American Lung Association that can supply the school nurse with health promotional and health education materials to assist with teaching children and adolescents who have asthma, or provide the school nurse with materials in order to developing a smoking cessation program, or providing educational materials to help safety guards students against air pollution. Candidates also recognize other partners within the school who partner with them in advocating for a healthy lifestyle, such as nutrition services and teachers in physical education. Candidates are encouraged to take on a project or leadership role in at least one of their practicum courses which frequently involves planning, organizing, and carrying out a health faire to a school site through

partnering with the school community and community agencies. Candidates are aware of the fact that they must bring parents and families along side as advocates to promote a healthy behaviors and lifestyles for their own children, recognizing that without family involvement, there is little chance for change in a child's health habits or nutritional habits. Candidates also come to realize that it is essential that youth need to be involved as partnerships in health promotion and health education, as they have insight into their own problems and can contribute to successful outcomes among peers.

The candidate demonstrates ability to advocate appropriately with students, families, community, and others to promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles.

This is evaluated by clinical instructor through journaling and through direct observation by the preceptor. **See Sec. 3** (p. 396 and p. 401), Preceptor Syllabus Checklist #E6, #E11, #E13, #E32 (elementary), and #S4, #S9, #S11, #S13, #32 (secondary). The preceptor must initial the competency and sign the checklist indicating all competencies have been met at the end of semester.

Criterion 3: Candidates use and model evidence-based health care practices in the delivery of school nursing services.

Prior to entering the credential program, candidates were required have taken a course in nursing research, as well as a statistics course, so that they will have an initial appreciation for the importance of research in nursing practice. While in core school nurse courses within the program, candidates come to understand the importance of evidence based practice in school nursing. In NURS 184, *Week 2*, candidates have the opportunity to respond to a question that asks them to discuss the impact that school nursing has on school performance and child well-being and the implications for further research findings to validate school nurse interventions in the educational setting. Candidates learn that evidence-based practice means the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care for clients, and that school nurses must make an effort to keep abreast of evidence based practice through reading current research articles specifically related to school nursing practice. Within the program, candidates have online access to the National School Nurses Association *Journal of School Nursing* and the American School Health Association *Journal of School Health*. Weekly questions in NURS 184 and NURS 185 require that candidates read current research articles in order to respond to the weekly questions. Candidates learn that school nurses cannot rely on intuition, unsystematic observations, pathophysiologic rationale, in providing appropriate care, but must use research and evidence to guide clinical decision making. Thus, evidence-based practice combines the current research-based evidence with clinical expertise and client preferences to make a decision about approaching the care for a specific child or adolescent. This is carried out in the NURS 186 in the clinical practice experience in that candidates must conduct

a case study in which they are expected to bring these three concepts together in meeting the healthcare needs of the child. There are journal questions in practicum courses in which candidates are asked to find research articles to read that specifically relate to client care in their clinical practice, and to relate how those findings can be applied in specific situations. Importance of research is also stressed in NURS 185, School Nurse Seminar, *Week 13*, where the benefits of research in school nursing are emphasized. Questions that week relate to applying research in school nursing, role of the school nurse in research projects, as well as grant writing and steps to publishing articles and research findings. Candidates in this course are also given the opportunity to do a research paper related to adolescent mental health issues in which they are required to review current research related to the subject matter. Online discussion with regard to evidence based practice also takes place among candidates in practicum courses. While candidates in the post-baccalaureate program are not asked to complete a research project, they are asked to carry out surveys to determine staff/student interest in health education offerings.

The candidate demonstrates the use and models evidence-based health care practice in the delivery of school nursing service:

This is evaluated by clinical instructor through journaling and through direct observation by the preceptor. **See Sec. 3** (p. 396 and p. 401), Preceptor Syllabus checklists #E33 (elementary), and #S33 (secondary). The preceptor must initial the competency and sign the checklist indicating all competencies have been met at the end of semester.

Criterion 4: Candidates can communicate effectively in writing and can make clear oral presentations to a wide variety of audiences.

Candidates in the program are expected to use APA format in all assignment work. If APA guidelines are not followed, or if there are typing errors or misspelled words, the paper will be graded down; or if more than six significant typos or misspelling are noted, the paper may be returned and the candidate asked to rewrite the paper. In both NURS 184, Introduction to School Nursing, and NURS 185, School Nurse Seminar, candidates are expected to develop a quality online presentation for classmates, usually a PowerPoint presentation, once during the semester. This is an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their creative writing skills. Classmates are asked to critique the presentation, which stretches presenters to do their best. Writing skill and correct formatting is also expected clinical journaling in the candidate's clinical experience in NURS 186 and NURS 187. Preceptors are also expected to review the candidate's written communications to parents and other professionals to determine quality and professionalism.

In NURS 187, candidates have an assignment in which they are asked to write a professional newsletter using the appropriate newsletter format, clipart, relevant subject matter, reference sources of information shared, etc. The newsletter must be approved by the candidate's preceptor

and an administrator before it can be sent to the target audience. The newsletter is also turned into the candidate's clinical instructor to be reviewed and points credit. In NURS 185, candidates are expected to write a professional and appropriate letter to a legislator regarding a current bill the candidate is following through the various legislative committees. The letter, part of a legislative assignment, is reviewed and points credited by the candidate's instructor. Candidates, while participating in online discussion in all four core school nurse courses, are expected to reread their postings to check for typos, spelling errors, and clarity, before submitting them.

In NURS 185, School Nurse Seminar, a question asks the candidates to evaluate their personal comfort in making an oral presentation in front of an audience, then they are directed to read through selected readings that will help the candidate develop self confidence in preparing and making oral presentations. Another question asks the candidate to prepare an outline that could be used to develop a PowerPoint presentation for a school board meeting on the role of the school nurse. Competency with regard to clarity and effectiveness of candidate oral communication is demonstrated in NURS 186, School Nurse Practicum I, (elementary) and in NURS 187, School Nurse Practicum II (secondary). In NURS 186, candidates are asked to present an age appropriate health lesson to a class or group elementary school age children. It is expected that the candidate's preceptor will be present during the presentation and will provide feedback, along with the classroom teacher, and the target audience. Candidates are expected to include a pre-post test along with the lesson that will help to determine learning outcomes.

Candidates are also expected to write a personal critique relating their experience, including strengths and weakness that need to be addressed before future presentations. In developing the lesson plan, candidates are expected to follow the guidelines for appropriateness of subject matter and learner readiness found in the CDE (2003) *Health Framework for Public Schools: Kindergarten through Twelfth grade*. In NURS 187, candidates are expected to make a choice between developing curriculum and presenting it in the classroom to a group of adolescents, or choice to facilitate several discussions among a group of secondary students related to common health issues. In NURS 185, *Week 4*, Guidelines for creating and facilitating groups and the group process are covered. As with the classroom presentation in NURS 186, the same guidelines for evaluating teaching effectiveness are followed in NURS 187. Candidates are also encouraged to take leadership roles in both practicum courses, this frequently involves making presentations at a faculty meeting, to a parent group, and even a school boards. Other types of oral communication are also monitored by the candidate's preceptor with regard to students coming into the health office, communication with other professionals, and in counseling with individual students and others.

The candidate demonstrates his/her ability to communicate effectively in writing and in making clear oral presentations to a wide variety of audiences:

This is evaluated by clinical instructor through journaling and through direct observation by the preceptor. **See Sec. 3** (p. 396 and p. 401), Preceptor Syllabus checklists #E35 (elementary), and #S34 (secondary). The preceptor must initial the competency and sign the checklist indicating all competencies have been met at the end of semester.

Criterion 5: Candidates organize and maintain accurate and complete health records.

In NURS 184, Introduction to School Nursing, *Week 3*, candidates are asked to respond to a question that asks them to compare the key provisions of HIPAA (Health Information Portability and Accountability Act of 1996), and FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act), the impact these laws have on school nursing practice and the steps school nurses need to take to stay within these laws. Candidates distinguish the difference between FERPA, which allows access to educational records by anyone with a legitimate educational interest, though this leads to confusion because it is left up to school districts to define who those individual are and the access limitations; and HIPAA, which does not govern school health records, however, affects schools because it can impede them from obtaining identifiable student information from health care providers. Therefore, candidates understand the need for a Release of Information in order to obtain and share confidential health information with health professionals in the community. Candidates also learn about the importance of using common nursing language and classification in writing. In NURS 184, *Week 9*, a question relates to the importance of sound documentation and use of standardized nursing language in school nursing practice. Candidates are asked to define “Nanda,” “Nic,” and “Noc,” and use of these terms by demonstrating their understanding through the developing of an IHP (individual healthcare plan) for a child with special needs. Throughout the ensuing weeks in the semester in NURS 184, candidates are asked to use standardized nursing language in developing IHPs that coincide with other weekly questions related to supposed clients with various health conditions.

In NURS 186 and NURS 187 (practicum courses), preceptors are expected to review candidate IHPs and documentation in student records, both hard copy and electronic. Record keeping is expected to be legible, succinct, sequential record of events, i.e. SOAP format; and the rule followed “if it isn’t documented, it isn’t done.” Candidates understand that accurate and complete record keeping is a vital aspect of school nursing. They learn that confidentiality and the maintenance of health records is a recurrent area of discord for school health professionals because health records are not distinguished from other types of education records, and because FERPA is less stringent than the laws that protect health records in a healthcare setting. While working under the guidance of a school nurse preceptor, candidates gain insight into the guidelines that they are expected to follow with regard to allowing access to school health

records. They are also expected to have insight into the sections of the Education Code related to confidentiality and student records. Candidates learn that the school nurse is legally and ethically responsible for protecting client privacy and confidentially, that health-related information in schools should only be shared on a need-to-know basis and that a parent have the ultimate right to decide what is shared and with whom. Candidates also learn that some confidential information that does not relate specifically to the student's educational experience should not be written or filed in the student's health record, but that the school nurse should keep this information in a personal confidential file completely separate from school files while the problem is resolved, and that this information should not be shared.

The candidate demonstrates the ability to maintain and accurate and complete health records:

This is evaluated by clinical instructor through journaling and through direct observation by the preceptor. **See Sec. 3** (p. 396 and p. 401), Preceptor Syllabus checklists #E38 (elementary), and #S36 (secondary). The preceptor must initial the competency and sign the checklist indicating all competencies have been met at the end of semester.

Criterion 6: Candidates use their time effectively, and manage fiscal and personnel resources prudently.

The importance of time management in school nursing is continually stressed in the program. This begins with helping candidates realize that being proactive and keeping up with assignment work on a weekly basis is paramount to stress reduction and enjoying the learning experience, and that this is also true in school nursing. It is pointed out to candidates that school nurses must be proactive, well organized, and prepared for inevitable interruptions. In NURS 186 and NURS 187 (practicum course) candidates are expected to keep a log of hours and document how their time is spent in clinical practice. In NURS 186, a journal question asks candidates to locate their job description for the school nurse to determine its relevancy to school nursing today and to realistically compare the time that the school nurse (the candidate if employed as a school nurse) has at a particular school site with the job expectations. Candidates are also expected to compare their job description with those of classmates during online discussion, as well as review the role of the school nurse described in Selekman (2004) *School Nursing: A Comprehensive Text* (course text). Finally, candidates are asked if there are things that they would like to see changed in their job description, with the suggestion that the candidate consider discussing their findings with their supervisor/school administrators. Another NURS 186 journal question asks the candidate to talk to their school principal and staff at the school site about the role of the school nurse, thereby promoting a realistic view of the school nurse's role relevant to the amount of time he/she has at the site with the hope that understanding that will allow the school nurse to use his/her time more effectively. A third NURS 186 journal question asked the candidate to talk to their preceptor about time management strategies, and methods for organizing and planning the

school nurse's school year. Candidates are then asked to compare and contrast their preceptor's method of time management with their own. In writing up their response to the question, candidates are to discuss ideas and time management methods they would incorporate or change as a result of the meeting with their preceptor. Candidates are also expected to consult with their text, Selekman (2004), *School Nursing: A Comprehensive Text*, for a further comparison in responding to the question. In both NURS 186 and NURS 187, candidates are evaluated by their preceptors with regard to their ability to organization and manage time wisely.

Candidates gain insight into fiscal management in their practicum experiences through spending quality time with an experienced school nurse preceptor who is able to share insight into grant opportunities for creating new programs and budget constraints with regard to ordering equipment and supplies. In NURS 186, School Nurse Practicum I, a journal question asks candidates to interview the district budgetary manager regarding the various sources of revenue that come into the school district (federal, state, county, and money from grants), and how it must be spent, i.e., categorical funds and percentage of money that is allotted for health services for personnel, equipment, and supplies for district schools. That same question asks candidates to assess the supplies in their school health office (or that of their preceptor) and to determine the district cost for one particular item, i.e. a box of band aids, and calculate how much is spent on that one item each year alone. Candidates are also to compare findings with information found in the Selekman text. In NURS 185, School Nurse Seminar, *Week 13*, candidates learn about grant writing in order to find funding sources for new programs and services. A question is asked about Healthy Start Grants, their establishment, key components and governance structure. It is suggested that candidates find out if a Healthy Start Grant has been funded in their school district and plan a visit to gain insight into how the funds are being used. In *Week 14*, the majority of the weekly questions relate to billing options for school health services and the role of the school nurse. In the first question, candidates are asked about MediCal billing options and the qualifying factors that allows the school nurse to bill for services; the second question, asks about MAA (MediCal Administrative Activities) and billing categories; a third question asks candidates to discuss TCM (Targeted Case Management) and who qualifies for services; a fourth question asks candidates to discuss district distribution of reimbursed funds and the population that should benefit from the reimbursement funds; and a fifth question asks candidates about "resource mapping," to determine funding sources, in this case, to fund defibrillators for several school sites.

In NURS 184, Introduction to School Nursing, the subject matter for *Week 3*, there is a cluster of weekly research questions that related to the role of the school nurse as a leader. What is a leader? What should a leader be able to do? What are leadership traits? How does the candidate see him/herself in a leadership role? Another cluster of questions asks candidates to relate the duties of the health clerk or health aide in the health office. Candidates are asked to discuss the educational background, depth of training, limitations, evaluation, and importance as a member

of the healthcare team. Candidates learn that the health aide is a valuable member of the healthcare team; that the duties the health clerk or aide are able to perform are not those of the school nurse, though free the school nurse to carry out those school nursing duties. In *Week 4*, candidates are asked to discuss the importance of employee satisfaction and important factors that lead to employee contentment and commitment, further to discuss employee concerns, motivation and need for support and encouragement; and to listing ways that a supervisor or employer can model behavior that they would like to see reflected in subordinates and others. Other questions for that week related to the concept of administration, management and conflict management skills. In NURS 186 and NURS 187 (practicum courses), candidates learn to appreciate the value of a reliable health aide or health office clerk. Gaining insight from an experience school nurse preceptor with regard to the role of the health clerk/aide and knowing the limitations of the job description and educational background of these valuable assistance, gives the candidate the knowledge necessary to be able to train and assign a health clerk/aide appropriate duties that complement, not conflict with the school nurse role. From assignments in NURS 184, candidates gained insight into the needs of employees for recognition, appreciation, and consideration and can factor these things in when interacting with these employees.

The candidate demonstrates the ability to use their time effectively, and manage fiscal and personnel resources prudently:

This is evaluated by clinical instructor through journaling and through direct observation by the preceptor. **See Sec. 3** (p. 396 and p. 401), Preceptor Syllabus checklists #E39 (elementary), and #S37 (secondary). The preceptor must initial the competency and sign the checklist indicating all competencies have been met at the end of semester.

Criterion 7: Candidates demonstrate the ability to train, supervise and monitor others who may assist with medication administration and may provide specialized physical health care procedures to students.

In NURS 184, Introduction to School Nursing, Week 5, candidates have the opportunity to respond to clusters of research questions asking the candidate to discuss legal guidelines for providing medication to pupils in school, i.e., who administers or assist the student to take the medication? Which emergency medications can be administered by a UAP (unlicensed assistive personnel) and which cannot? Candidates are also responsible for identifying the section of the Education Code that specifically addresses medication at school and sections of the Business and Professional Code that relate specifically to the Nurse Practice Act, which clearly spells out the guidelines that registered nurses are to follow with regard to training UAPs. In another cluster of questions, candidates are asked to discuss the steps the school nurse will take in training UAPs to “assist” school age children in taking medication and which emergency medications may be

administered by a UAP in the absence of the school nurse. Other questions related to training guidelines that cover the “five rights” in giving medication, competency issues and accountability. In the Documents sections in the online program in all four core school nurse courses, candidates find documents related to the legal guidelines, court decisions, and the role of the school nurse in training UAPs with regard to medications. Several of these documents relate specifically to the administration of insulin. In Week 15, a cluster of questions relates to outlining the important steps the school nurse must take in training UAPs to provide special physical healthcare procedures. Again, competence and accountability and the question is asked, who is responsible for the competency of the individual trained? What is the responsibility of the school nurse in the event a care provider is hired from an outside agency?

In NURS 186, candidates are required to spend time working under the supervision of a qualified school nurse providing specialized physical healthcare procedures to school age children who are medically fragile and those requiring specialized physical healthcare procedures. Candidates, under the supervision their school nurse preceptor, also have the opportunity to train UAPs, or work with their preceptor in training UAPs, who are expected to assisting students with taking medications and to administer approved emergency medications in the absence of the school nurse. Again, under the supervision of their school nurse preceptor, candidates are also expected to supervise, monitor, and evaluate UAPs, and others, who will provide specialized physical healthcare procedures.