

# The PASNAP Pulse

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Winter 2025

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## Better Together Charlene Koretz, MSHE, BSN, RN

Unions give all educators a voice in their workplace. As union members, we work together to fight for great public schools for every student, regardless of zip code. Collective bargaining helps assure fair wages and benefits, and the negotiation of better teaching and learning conditions benefits the total school community through educator recruitment and retention. By joining your national and local union, you have the power to advocate for better pay and benefits, better working conditions, and better learning conditions for our students.

When you join the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) you also become a member of the National Education Association (NEA) through its affiliate membership. NEA advocates for all education professionals. NEA unites all members to fulfill the promise of public education: a nation where every student is prepared to succeed in a diverse and interconnected world. PSEA promotes, protects, and advocates for our schools, students, and professions.

The School Nurse Section of the De-

partment of Pupil Services (DPS) of PSEA cooperates with and supports PSEA through DPS to encourage professional growth, advance public education, promote cooperation with educational and community groups, and promote collegiality among school nurses. Active membership in PSEA's School Nurse Section extends to all who are properly certified and currently employed as a school nurse.

In addition to being part of your union membership, all nurses should be actively engaged in the organization that represents their specialty. Nursing organizations allow nurses to help to drive policy and practice, support health topics that make a difference in the population we represent, and network with other nurses of similar specialties, interests, and education levels.

The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) promotes optimizing student health and learning by advancing the practice of school nursing through engaging school nurses in 21st Century Practice; pursuing health, education, and

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## Getting Ready for PASNAP Conference 2025 by Holly Verderame MSN, RN, CSN

It's hard to believe that in a quick three months we will all be together at our annual conference! This year's conference, *Caring for Pennsylvania's Future* will be held March 21-23, 2025, at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center in State College. Room reservations can be made through the Penn Stater. Use the code PASNP25 to book your room! Friday night will offer preconference, regional meetings, and bingo! Saturday we will have a full day of educational offerings, vendors, our Awards Dinner and Legislative Auction. In addition to our Annual Business Meeting Sunday morning, we will have two general sessions! Conference favorites like the Saturday Morning Walk/Run, SIG luncheons, and the Sunday Blessing of the Hands Ceremony are all on this year's agenda! Some of our favorite speakers are back this year, including Dr. Robert Olympia! Look for conference registration to open in January. We look forward to spending the weekend with you in State College!



# A Message From Our President



**Anne-Marie Crawford, RN, MSN, NCSN**

As winter break comes to an end and we head back to school, it's the perfect time for a fresh start—not just for students, but for our health offices as well. Have you ever stopped to think about how the atmosphere in your health office might reflect who you are as a nurse? The way your space feels can have an impact on your students, even if you don't realize it.

Every school nurse sets an environment, or “tone,” in their office. This tone can vary—some nurses focus on creating an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome, while others might prioritize minimizing time away from class, adopting a “treat ‘em and street ‘em” approach. Some nurses cultivate a sanctuary that is the safe place to cry, while others promote independence with help-yourself stations for essentials like feminine products, deodorant, and band-aids. Maybe your focus is on health education, guiding students towards healthier habits and choices.

Take a minute to reflect on your

personal vision of school nursing and your role in the school.

What do you want to convey about school health? What message do you want to send? Once

you have this vision, try putting it into words—and if you're feeling inspired, write it down.

Defining your vision helps bring clarity to your role and empowers you to design an environment that aligns with your values.

Once you have defined your vision, take a good look around your health office. Are there small changes you can make to foster your vision in your space? A few simple things can go a long way. Consider your vision when planning your bulletin boards. Could you add posters or signs to your office that direct students what to do? Elements like this can encourage independence, wellness, or emotional safety. Are there physical items that can nurture the feeling—like the self-serve area? Think about the messages that small details, like a bulletin board or a first-aid station, send to students. Every choice in your space contributes to the environment you're trying to create.

When you take the time to reflect on your role as a school nurse and translate that into a clear, intentional vision for your health office, you set expectations for both students and staff. Your space becomes more than just a place to get treatment—it becomes an extension of your values and an environment that promotes well-being, independence, and support.

**SCH  
NURSE**



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**Contact your Board Members  
at**

**[pasnapnurses@gmail.com](mailto:pasnapnurses@gmail.com)**



# PASNAP 2025: Caring for Pennsylvania's Future

Annual Education Conference  
March 21-23, 2025  
The Penn Stater, State College, PA

## CONFERENCE FEE SCHEDULE

Must Register by  
**2/21/25** for Early Bird Discount

Conference Registration Deadline **3/7/2025**

	<u>PASNAP/NASN Members</u>	<u>Nonmembers</u>
Preconference, Friday <b>3/21/2025</b>	Early bird: \$75.00 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$100.00	Early bird: \$100.00 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$125.00
Full Conference, Saturday 3/22/25 to Sunday 3/23/25 (includes all meals)	Early bird: \$375 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$425	Early bird: \$495 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$525
Saturday 3/22/25 Only (breakfast and lunch included)	Early bird: \$300 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$350	Early bird: \$420 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$470
Sunday 3/23/25 Only (½ day am; meals not included)	Early bird: \$75 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$100	Early bird: \$100 After <b>2/21/25</b> : \$125

- If you are submitting a Poster Presentation, please contact Anne-Marie Crawford via email (amcrawford22@gmail.com) by **MARCH 15, 2025**. Include "Poster Presentation" in the subject line.



## The School Nurse's Role in Creating Individualized Health Plans and Emergency Action Plans

### Charlene Koretz, MSHE, BSN, RN

Barbie loves school, and her teachers and other support staff know exactly what to do if she complains of not feeling well, appears tired, or her lips or fingers are visibly blue. Barbie has Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome which adversely affects her stamina and ability to regulate body temperature. Barbie's Individualized Health Plan (IHP) includes her baseline oxygen saturation rates in the low to mid 90s. If her saturation rate falls to 80% or less, she must be evaluated in the Emergency Department.

The IHP is an essential tool and professional plan used by the school nurse to support students to be healthy, safe, and ready to learn while ensuring care coordination, care continuity, academic success, and optimal attendance (NASN, 2024). *The School Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice (NASN, 2022) provides a step-by-step approach to guide the school nurse in the process of determining if a student needs an IHP.*

The IHP is:

- a legal document which shows proof that the school nurse provides a minimum standard of care for a student with a health condition
- a nursing responsibility based on state nurse practice acts
- written in alignment with applicable state laws and local school district policies
- written by the school nurse for students whose healthcare needs require more complex school nursing services (NASN, 2020b)
- intended for use by the school nurse and written in nursing language (Galemore & Sheetz, 2015)
- a nursing care plan for the educational setting

School nurses use the nursing process and the school nursing standards to complete IHPs (NASN, 2022). Using nursing judgment, school nurses determine which students need an IHP and which plans need to be written first. The school nurse should prioritize students with more complex health conditions and those with the potential for life-threatening events.

The school nurse must collaborate with the parents or guardians, the student, health care providers, and the school team to formulate the IHP. The IHP serves as a tool to guide health care for a student:

- throughout the school day
- to and from school
- and in mandated school-sponsored events (NASN, 2020b)

The IHP should be evaluated and updated by the school nurse:

- at least annually
- more frequently if changes are warranted (Bochenek & Schaumleffel, 2024)

Incorporate the following information into the IHP:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• student's name</li> <li>• grade</li> <li>• teacher</li> <li>• medications</li> <li>• medical condition</li> <li>• health care provider contact information</li> <li>• parent/guardian contact information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• location for EMS</li> <li>• baseline health status</li> <li>• triggers for medical condition</li> <li>• assessment information</li> <li>• student goals or outcomes</li> <li>• nursing diagnosis</li> <li>• planning</li> <li>• implementation</li> <li>• proposed evaluation measures</li> </ul>
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## The School Nurse's Role in Creating Individualized Health Plans and Emergency Action Plans Continued from Page 4

The IHP is used as the building block for other school-related plans, including the emergency action plan/emergency care plan (EAP/ECP). It is the school nurse who uses the nursing process and nursing judgment to determine if a student's health condition could elevate to a medical crisis, requiring an EAP/ECP (NASN, 2020b). The information provided by licensed providers in specific medical orders and action plans can be used by the school nurse in developing an EAP/ECP.

The EAP is shared with appropriate school staff and directs the specific actions school staff should take for a student to respond to an emergent health care need (Bochenek & Schaumleffel, 2024). The school nurse is responsible for training all staff members who have responsibility for the student in order to implement the EAP.

The school nurse can create their own template for an IHP and/or EAP if the school does not have a required format or school nurses may use this [IHP Template 2024](#) and this [EAP Template 2024](#). IHPs and EAPs serve as ongoing communication and collaboration between the school nurse, students, parents, the primary health care provider, and the school team.

### References

#### Flu Vaccinations down in PA and Nationwide by Valerie Zanotti M Ed, BSN, RN, CSN

Flu shots are down in Pennsylvania and in every state except Iowa so far this season. Approximately 37% of children nationwide have received their flu shots for the 2024-25 season so far, down 7% from the same time last year. In PA, flu vaccine rates have dropped by more than 10% to 35.4% from the same time last year. The 2023-24 flu season saw 54% of kids immunized against the flu, compared to 62% in the 2019-20 flu season. Last year saw 200 pediatric flu-related deaths according to the CDC. (Please see article: [https://www.axios.com/local/philadelphia/2024/12/16/flu-shots-kid-vaccination-rate-pennsylvania?utm\\_source=ActiveCampaign&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=Trump%20s%20AG%20pick%20spread%20misinfo%20about%20PA%20s%20election&utm\\_campaign=PA%20Post%2012%2017%2024](https://www.axios.com/local/philadelphia/2024/12/16/flu-shots-kid-vaccination-rate-pennsylvania?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Trump%20s%20AG%20pick%20spread%20misinfo%20about%20PA%20s%20election&utm_campaign=PA%20Post%2012%2017%2024))

Overall childhood vaccine rates have decreased as vaccine skepticism among parents has increased leading to increased vaccine exemptions among kindergarten students. Increases in outbreaks of measles nationwide is one example of the result of vaccine skepticism. PASNAP mirrors the position of NASN in that immunizations are essential to preventing serious childhood illnesses through the prevention of diseases, and that exemptions should exist only for those children in whom it is medically contraindicated (NASN position statement). School nurses are in a position to inform parents about the safety and efficacy of childhood immunizations and flu vaccinations. School nurses are trusted by parents, and with their access to state immunization registries, school nurses can deliver reliable information about the importance of immunizations in preventing disease, allowing students and staff to remain healthy and in school.



## School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice and School Nurse Evaluation

Jacquelyn M. Buige Raco, MSN, M.Ed., CSSHS, CSN

In 2022, the American Nurses Association (ANA), in collaboration with the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), revised and produced "[School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, 4th Edition](#)".

The scope describes the who, what, where, when, how, and why of school nursing practice. These elements ensure that school nursing practice is well-defined and aligns with the mission of supporting student health and academic success.

There are eighteen total standards of school nursing practice. Standards of practice (1-6) and standards of professional performance (7-18) reflect the profession's values and priorities, setting clear expectations for nursing practice in schools. The first six standards of practice are the steps of the nursing process and direct school nursing practice. Standards of professional performance describe how the nurse implements the standards of practice at a competent level of behavior in the professional role.

In 2024, NASN released the revised [School Nursing Practice Framework™](#), which depicts the School Nursing Standards of Practice principle as "the foundational layer of practice and performance standards necessary to provide legally sound, evidence-based, clinically competent, quality care" (NASN, 2024).

As of 2021, Act 13 of 2020 assures that the [Educator Effectiveness \(EE\)](#) process is used to evaluate professional employees in PK-12 education in Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania Department of Education [PDE], 2024). This evaluation system applies to the school health specialist or school nurse. The process defines Four Domains of Professional Practice for School Health Specialists. Domain One (planning and preparation) and Domain Four (professional development) specifically cite that the school nurse will have knowledge of the Scope and Standards of School Nursing Practice *and will be rated on their ability to demonstrate standards of practice within their school population with adherence to ethical standards and professionalism*.

Be sure you have a copy of the publication! Include this in your budget as an essential resource. Regularly reviewing and integrating these standards is crucial for demonstrating professional attributes and allows you to identify areas of improvement. By understanding the full scope of school nursing practice, you can demonstrate to your administrator your school nursing knowledge, skills, and attributes in your evaluation process, showing your effectiveness as a professional school nurse in addressing the challenges of your school population.

National Association of School Nurses. (2024). A contemporary framework update for today's school nursing landscape: Introducing the School Nursing Practice Framework. *NASN School Nurse*, 39(3), 140–147. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/1942602X241241092>

Pennsylvania Department of Education Standards Aligned System (2024). Educator Effectiveness Observation & Practice Framework for non-teaching professionals: School health specialist (School Nurse, Dental Hygienist). [PDF]. <https://www.pdesas.org/Frameworks/TeacherFrameworks/TeacherEffectiveness/?SectionPageId=12201>



# NCSN Upcoming Testing Dates and Deadlines



For information and registration for becoming NCSN certified visit the website at  
<https://www.nbcsn.org/>

or contact Maureen Callas NBCSN State Liaison at [NurseCallas@gmail.com](mailto:NurseCallas@gmail.com)

The exam will be offered during the following testing windows in 2025:

Spring Testing Window: March 1 – 31, 2025 Registration Window: November 25, 2024 – February 1, 2025

Summer Testing Window: July 7 – August 10, 2025 Registration Window: April 1 – June 7, 2025

Fall Testing Window: October 23 – November 23, 2025 Registration Window: August 11 – September 23, 2025



## NBCSN



## Free NASN Clinical Guidelines, Toolkits, and E-Manuals

All PA School Nurses Have Access to Free NASN Clinical Guidelines, Toolkits, and E-Manuals  
 All Pennsylvania school nurses, including PASNAP members and non-members, can access the National Association of School Nurses' (NASN) *Clinical Guidelines, Toolkits, and E-Manuals* at [NASN Learning Center Clinical Guidelines](#) or [NASN Learning Center Toolkits & E-Manuals](#).

If you are not a NASN member, there are no costs for accessing *Clinical Guidelines, Toolkits, or E-Manuals* but you will need to sign in to access. If you do not have a customer or member account with NASN, you may [create an account from the sign-in or login page HERE](#) and then use the account to access these resources.

If you are interested in becoming a NASN member, information can be found at [Become a NASN Member](#).

## Better Together Continued from Page 1

social equity for students through shared leadership; and securing foundational school health evidence. When you join NASN, you also join the NASN Pennsylvania State Affiliate, the Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners (PASNAP).

NASN and PASNAP members benefit from free and discounted continuing education opportunities via access to nursing publications and professional tools of practice which keep us up to date on the latest research evidence for practice. Benefits also include NASN's position papers and statements to educate members, connection to PASNAP's newsletter, advocacy on the national and state level on critical issues, and networking opportunities.

If we want to change something at our school, in our district, in our state, or even nationally, being part of both our union and our school nurse professional organization is one way to make that change. When we choose to belong to something bigger and more important than ourselves and get involved in our organizations, our voices are heard. Together, we can accomplish incredible feats.

## [References](#)



## AED Upkeep in School: Is Yours Ready to Go? by Kathy Verbel

Maintaining current CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training is a given in school nursing. It is a requirement of employment. Return demonstrations including establishing unresponsiveness, activating EMS, checking airway, breathing and circulation (ABCs), and applying AED electrode pads then following the machine's prompts to deliver a "shock" may be routine to many.

But what would happen if the moment arrived when you needed the AED and it did not function, or necessary items to provide emergency care were unavailable? The result could be catastrophic.

Routine checks of this vital piece of equipment will keep it working properly. However, the steps to ensure an AED's optimal function may be breezed over or not included in your mandated training. This article will review basic AED upkeep.

In your workplace who is responsible for the AED checks? Is it the school nurses, custodians, maintenance personnel, others? Even if you are not the designated person responsible for maintenance checks, as the school nurse, you have a hand in ensuring the AED arrives at the scene rapidly when needed. See to it that AEDs are stored in central locations, easily accessible and clearly marked. How many AEDs do you need in your building? Use the 3-minute test. It is recommended that a shock be delivered within 3–5 minutes of a victim's collapse. Can you retrieve the AED and be back at the site in 4 minutes to provide care from all areas of the school? If not, you may need another unit for an effective AED program. Campaign for this with administrators, PTAs, parents and the school board. Verify that AEDs get placed at sites of higher public attendance, like gyms, cafeterias and auditoriums or outside the school nurse's office if it is appropriately located in the school.

Make sure that ALL building staff can find the AED if asked to run for it in an emergency. Talk with your principal to include the AED location as part of new staff and substitute building orientation. Confirm that the location of the device is marked on the fire escape plan that should be posted in every room. Remind staff during staff meetings of AED location(s) at least biannually. Use a staff meeting to take a field trip to view all the AEDs. Have the staff practice retrieving an AED from multiple areas of the building. If your unit is in an alarmed case, open it. Make sure staff recognize the sound. This could alert them to a medical emergency in the school, indicating a building emergency plan needs to be activated.

So, your district HAS assigned the AED checks to the school nurses? Although model requirements can differ, the general steps to evaluate an AED's readiness are similar. The frequency of AED checks may vary, from daily to monthly or more. AEDs must be maintained and tested according to the manufacturer's operational guidelines as detailed in the user's manual. Know your district policy. Checks may be more frequent than recommended but should NOT be less. Documentation of these maintenance checks is needed. Most commonly a maintenance checklist is located by the unit to complete per policy. If one is not available, samples of many free checklists can be found online. Get one approved by the appropriate committee and adopt it for your district to ensure uniformity of the process and accurate records.

Here are some suggested tips when checking your defibrillator.

- Placement is highly visible, and unobstructed, with AED sign displayed.
- If the unit is in an AED case, the alarm sounds and/or

sends a signal to a monitoring location when opened.

- AED is free of damage, clean and without signs of wear. Case is clean.
- AED battery is properly charged. Dependent on the model, it may show a symbol, "OK", green check or blinking green light. Some AEDs may direct you to turn on the unit and complete a self-test. Others advise this is only done infrequently to optimize battery life. Again, follow your policy and manufacturer recommendations.
- Note AED battery expiration date to make sure it is still good. If a spare battery is present, make sure to note it too. Order replacement batteries with plenty of lead time to ensure they are received when required.
- Adult and pediatric AED pads are present in sealed packages, in good condition. Note expiration date. Order replacement pads in a timely manner as well.
- Confirm that all necessary medical supplies are present and in good condition: razor, trauma shears to cut clothing, sets of examination gloves in appropriate sizes, pocket mask / face barrier, gauze pads/ cloth.
- If an oxygen tank is housed with AED confirm that tank is full, with the needle in the green. Check that an oxygen delivery system is present and in good condition.

If any item on check list is found to be deficient, make sure to log it and steps of follow up completed. Take corrective action *immediately*. *This could be as simple as replacing worn or missing medical supplies with items you have on hand or wiping down the unit. If the AED is not functional, remove it from service. Notify the appropriate person(s) immediately and follow directions for corrective action. Perhaps a loaner unit or replacement parts kept at another site can be brought to your school. If at ANY time, the AED must be removed from service be sure to notify all school staff immediately. Include details of the backup plan. Maybe the loaner AED must temporarily be kept in an alternate location. TELL THE STAFF. Document, document, document! Once the issue is resolved, be sure to update them on this fact as well.*

Be sure that if other personnel are assigned to AED checks, they know to report any issues noted to the school nurse *immediately*. *YOU need to be aware of any follow-up needed and when it is completed. And if this is not in your policy, make noise. Get it added.*

Even if other employees are responsible for AED maintenance, it is good practice to look them over periodically yourself. Be familiar with your emergency equipment. At the time of the emergency, it will be time well spent.

### References

American Heart Association. *Automated External Defibrillator Maintenance Checklist*.

<https://images.app.goo.gl/mrxdXzN3oDR5h1JD9> Retrieved 12/16/24

CPR BLS Pros. *Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Monthly Inspection* <https://images.app.goo.gl/ghyTUNyjpjZxHp7>

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<https://defibsplus.com.au/the-maintenance-and-lifespan-of-aed-units/> Retrieved 12/16/24

Enser, Kelly. *AED Maintenance for School*. March 28, 2022. <https://www.firstresponsecpr.com/blog/aed-maintenance-for-schools/?srsltid=> Retrieved 12/17/24



## School Nurse Spotlight

4 school nurses from Blackhawk, Bethel Park, Quaker Valley and Upper St Clair were honored at the Pittsburgh Penguins game on November 19, 2024! 8 nurses were recognized for their commitment to the nursing profession. The 8 nurses with the most votes were honored on the ice and rode the fanboni! The four school nurses were Eileen Wallace of Bethel Park School District, Holly Fisher of Upper St Clair School District, Melinda Haddox of Blackhawk School District and Amanda Gilmore of Quaker Valley School District. <https://nurse.org/articles/search/?q=Pittsburgh+penguins>



## Stay in touch

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### Do you have a story, anecdote or 'aha moment you are willing to share with your peers?

- a heart warming narrative
- a student comment that made you grin from ear to ear
- a wonderful resource in the community, on the web, or for your smart phone
- a new way of doing something ( or an old way that still works great!)
- an award or accomplishment that made you proud

Send to [NurseCallas@gmail.com](mailto:NurseCallas@gmail.com) "attention Pulse newsletter "



*The PASNAP Pulse*

**PASNAP Pulse Editor**

Maureen J. Callas M Ed, BSN, RN, NCSN