

SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTER PROGRAM

Consent for Services Overview

The School-Based Health Center Program (SBHC) is a joint effort of the Windham Board of Education and Windham Hospital, A Healthcare Partner of Hartford Hospital. Currently, there are SBHC's located in Windham High School, Windham Middle School and Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy. This program is available to all students in these schools *in addition* to the school nurse.

WHAT IS A SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER? A SBHC is a licensed, comprehensive primary health care center directly within the school setting. Staff includes both a medical provider such as a nurse practitioner/APRN and a social service provider such as a licensed clinical social worker. The SBHC does **not** take the place of your child's doctor but works in tangent with your own health care provider.

WHAT DOES A SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER DO? SBHC's provide a variety of services including physical exams, health care services for students who are ill, co-management with a child's primary care provider of all health-related issues including asthma and diabetes; immunization updates; reproductive health services including pregnancy testing and prevention counseling, testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (age 12 and over), in addition to individual, group and family counseling, parent guidance, classroom education on wellness issues; crisis intervention and referrals to community providers as needed. As of the school year 2004-2005, the Windham Board of Education now allows the SBHC to prescribe and dispense contraception to students age 13 and older.

HOW CAN A STUDENT USE THE SBHC? A student **must** have a consent form signed by his/her parent or guardian in order to receive SBHC services. If the student is 18 years or older or is emancipated, he/she can sign for themselves. The consent form is valid for as long as the student is enrolled in Windham Public Schools. If the student is no longer in any program of the school system, as of the last day of the school year he/she will no longer be eligible for services from the SBHC program until a new consent form is signed. Parent or guardians may withdraw consent, in writing, at any time from the SBHC program.

HOW ARE THESE SERVICES PAID FOR? The State of Connecticut contributes funds for the operation of the SBHC Program. As of August 1996, the SBHC Program was required to bill third party insurance companies for services provided in the SBHC's. Billing of third party insurers will assist us in covering the increasing costs of operation. **You or your child will not be charged directly for any services.** Students and families without any insurance coverage will not be charged as the services will be covered by existing grants. In addition, we may be able to assist your family with an application for the HUSKY program.

The SBHC will not be billing parents or students directly for any co-payments required by your insurance. We will not seek payment from you if you have not met your insurance company's deductibles and will not seek direct payment from you if the claim we submit to an insurance company for services provided is denied. Our billing should not have any impact on the premiums you pay.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The SBHC Program adheres to all current laws regarding confidentiality of health services in general and specifically as they relate to services to minors, including rights of minors (ages 12 and older) to access reproductive health care. The SBHC's may release and receive information regarding your child and/or services provided in order to bill third party payers including private insurance and Medicaid for services and for healthcare operations, treatment and to assure continuity of care, including sharing pertinent information with your child's doctor. The Notice of Privacy which outlines how we may use and disclose your child's protected health information is available in our office and upon request.

The Windham Board of Education and Windham Hospital maintain a partnership to ensure easy access to health care for all students. By operating health centers on school grounds, Windham Hospital accepts a unique responsibility to promote a safe and healthy school environment for all students. SBHC staff will cooperate and communicate with the Board of Education staff whenever student behavior/or health may result in risk of harm to the student or others within the educational setting. The SBHC staff will follow protocols and policies developed by Windham Hospital as well as those detailed in the Windham Board of Education Staff manual and Student Handbook. Completing and signing the consent form authorizes us to release and receive information as identified in the Windham Hospital SBHC Privacy Notice.