HealthReach

School-Based Health Centers FAQs

Care for all · Supporting Families · Healthy Kids, Better Learning · Whole Student Support

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q: What is a School-Based Health Center (SBHC)?

A: HealthReach SBHCs are comprehensive, integrated, and culturally responsive health centers that provide healthcare to students and staff. SBHCs allow patients to access convenient healthcare that helps improve student attendance, reduce travel and missed work time for parents and guardians, and provide whole student support inside and outside the classroom. There are nearly 4,500 SBHCs across the United States!

Q: Are SBHCs funded by the school district?

A: No, HealthReach SBHCs are not funded by the school district. We partner with the district to organize exam space to see patients, which offers convenient, positive health and educational outcomes. The district provides the space for the SBHC, inclusive of utilities and cleaning services. HealthReach outfits the space with equipment and supplies and employs the clinician and clinical support staff. HealthReach funds its operations through, a combination of patient fees, insurance reimbursements, federal and foundation grants, and private donations.

Q: What services are provided at SBHCs?

A: SBHCs provide access to all medical services that would be provided at a standard primary care office — including, but not limited to: routine physical and sports checkups, chronic and acute care management, vaccines, mental healthcare, laboratory services, reproductive healthcare and education, and referrals.

Q: What is the difference between the school nurse and the SBHC?

A: The school nurse provides care for the school population, performing triage for daily health concerns, as well as state assessments and screenings. HealthReach SBHCs work with the school's nurse to manage chronic and acute conditions and provide services that extend beyond the school nurse's scope of practice.

Q: Would the SBHC clinician be considered my child's primary care provider?

A: HealthReach SBHC clinicians can work with your child's primary care provider (PCP) to supplement an already established care plan. Alternatively, the health center's clinician can become your child's PCP if they do not have one. This decision is unique to each student's needs and can be decided by the student's guardian.

Q: Are appointments scheduled during class time?

A: While appointments may be scheduled during class time, the SBHC works with student schedules to prioritize study hall and extracurricular periods as preferred appointment times to ensure minimal disruption to their coursework. Appointments taken at SBHCs help to reduce the amount of time a student is away from class, removing the need for travel and for parents and guardians to take time off from work.

ENROLLMENT

Q: How do I enroll my child?

A: You can enroll your child by completing a New Patient Packet, which can be found at: ***https://www.healthreach.org/for-patients/patient-forms/*** and dropped off at the SBHC. New packets can also be picked up from the school nurse or front office.

Q: Do I need to enroll my child if they are already a HealthReach Health Center patient?

A: All patients of the SBHC need to be independently enrolled at the SBHC. This ensures guardians are aware that their child is seeking services when appropriate. Once the child is independently enrolled, our shared health record system is accessible between the SBHC and the child's other HealthReach provider(s), if applicable, which ensures consistency and communication in their care.

INSURANCE

Q: We do not have insurance and cannot cover the cost of a healthcare visit.

A: HealthReach is a 0-barrier health center. We offer an Affordable Care Program (also known as a sliding fee scale) to insured and uninsured Mainers who qualify. Thanks to funding from the U.S. Bureau of Primary Health Care, this program reduces what you pay for healthcare based on family size and income. We also offer medication cost support and other pay support options to patients who qualify. If you need more information about payment options or insurance, please call (207) 660 - 9948 to talk to our HealthReach Connector.

Q: Are low-income families the only ones eligible for care through SBHCs?

A: All enrolled students and school staff are eligible to receive services through HealthReach's SBHCs, regardless of income or insurance status. We accept Medicare, MaineCare, and most major insurance providers in addition to our in-house Affordable Care Program.

CARE

Q: Are there telehealth options available when schools have modified schedules, like remote learning or school breaks?

A: HealthReach SBHCs are open from 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. during regular school hours. When school is not in session, such as during break, the health centers are often closed. The health center may offer a limited schedule, alternate locations, and telehealth services to accommodate school schedule changes, depending on student need and situation.

Q: Can my child get referrals at the SBHC?

A: Yes, clinical staff at the SBHC can provide referrals for specialty care or for additional diagnostic testing, just like a traditional primary care office can.

Q: Can my child be seen at other HealthReach locations?

A: Your child can be seen at other HealthReach locations once they are enrolled as an SBHC patient. For a complete list of HealthReach locations, please see our website, HealthReach.org, and click on "Our Locations."

Q: What happens after my child graduates?

A: Patients can choose to continue to receive their care through another HealthReach location or our clinicians and staff can help the patient establish care at another healthcare provider.

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