



**Superintendent's
Circular
School Year 2013-2014**

NUMBER:
SHS-23

DATE:
September 26, 2013

CONDOM ACCESSIBILITY

BACKGROUND

In June 2013, the School Committee voted to revise the district Wellness Policy, which includes provisions on sexual health education and condom accessibility in high schools. The revised policy states:

BPS High Schools shall provide access to condoms, with appropriate health education and counseling services, for all students. Condoms will be accessible from community health service partners, the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) or, when neither community health service partners nor BPHC staff are available, from appropriate school staff. Schools will adhere to Massachusetts state confidentiality laws. Boston Public Schools encourages communication and involvement with family regarding health services, and parents and legal guardians may exempt their children from receiving condoms by notifying the school when they complete the family information forms at the beginning of the school year.

The Health Service department is charged, under this policy, with enacting systems and practices to ensure that all students have access to key resources and services that are developmentally appropriate and support sexual and reproductive health in a safe and supportive environment.

BPS high schools have three possible venues for the delivery of sexual health services: 1) BPS school nurses in all high schools; 2) school-based health centers run by BPHC or neighborhood health centers that provide medical, reproductive and mental health services including STI/pregnancy testing, options counseling, access to contraceptives/condoms, treatment for STIs, and comprehensive routine health care; and 3) school-based health resource centers (HRCs), new in SY2011-12 and overseen by the Boston Public Health Commission, which provide individual counseling, condom access, and STI testing and treatment for gonorrhea and Chlamydia, where available. The following chart summarizes the services available and staffing model for each venue.

Venue	School-based Health Centers Run by BPHC	School-based Health Centers Run by community health centers	Health Resource Centers *	BPS High Schools with School Nurse but without SBHC or HRC
Services	A clinical setting offering routine health care and acute care services, including mental health counseling and sexual & reproductive health care	A clinical setting offering routine health care and acute care services, including mental health counseling and sexual and reproductive health care only in some centers	Classroom sexual health education; 1:1 education; condom availability; STI screening, treatment and referral, where available	Inclusive of all school nursing duties and responsibilities

Venue	School-based Health Centers Run by BPHC	School-based Health Centers Run by community health centers	Health Resource Centers *	BPS High Schools with School Nurse but without SBHC or HRC
Staffing	Staffed by Nurse Practitioner, Mental Health Clinician, Health Educator and Health Coordinator/Admin Assistant	Staffed by Nurse Practitioners or Physician Assistants, authorized to diagnose, treat and prescribe medications, supervised by an MD	A team of two Health Educators (male & female) assigned to 2 high schools	School Nurse staffing ranges from 0.5 – 2.5 FTE per school

* Under Massachusetts Law, adolescents may seek confidential health services for treatment of sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancy without parental notification. In addition, the wellness policy allows non-clinical staff such as guidance counselors, health educators or physical education staff to participate in the accessibility process, with appropriate training.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of condom accessibility will be directed by Health Services with support from and integration with the prevention efforts of the Health & Wellness Department at both the central and individual school levels.

School-Based Implementation

Each high school will have a Condom Accessibility Team (CAT) chaired by the school nurse and including at least one wellness team member, the principal, and any other interested staff. The CAT shall meet at least once a year to oversee its responsibilities and report back to the Wellness Council.

Condom Accessibility Team Responsibilities:

- Determine the process of school based implementation based on the other school based health resources available and student needs for other sexual health services (school nurse, HRC, SBHC, referral to community youth friendly sexual health services.) The process will be documented as part of the Wellness Action Plan as outlined in the Wellness Policy Circular.
- Ensure that student confidentiality is maintained as per Massachusetts state law.
- Develop and distribute staff, student, family informational tools (brochures, posters, electronic notification, etc) that outline the program of services for that school and how the condom accessibility component interfaces with the various sexual health service venues.
- Ensure that all parents have had a chance to opt out of condom accessibility. *However, an adolescent, under Massachusetts adolescent confidentiality laws, may seek confidential treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and diagnosis of pregnancy. This is a separate activity from condom accessibility.*
- Ensure that parental opt out is clearly documented in the nurse electronic health record and communicated to all appropriate staff involved in condom accessibility
- Ensure that the accessibility process aligns with the sexual health education curriculum and other sexual health programming
- Ensure that the school wellness council is updated at least once annually
- Participate in CAT training as determined and organized by the central team
- Oversee the ordering and storage of condoms for the school.
- Tracking aggregate data of condom distribution from the different venues

District-Based Implementation

Health Services Department will be responsible for:

- Aligning the condom accessibility process with the overall Health Service action planning
- Monitoring and Evaluation of each school's accessibility process
- Oversight of ordering and storing of condoms for the district and distribution to schools
- Organization of training programs for the health service clinicians
- Assisting in the development of individual school accessibility programs, as needed
- Alignment with Health & Wellness department sexual health programming and curriculum
- Alignment and communication with adolescent community sexual health programming
- Confidential counseling of the students accessing condoms

Health & Wellness department will:

- Align the condom accessibility process with the overall wellness action planning assessment and support
- Reconfigure the template for wellness action plan reporting to include condom accessibility program reporting
- Collaborate with Health Services Department to provide implementation tools to schools and technical assistance

Summary of significant dates and deadlines:

Date	Activity
October 2013	Parental Opt-out letter sent home

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