

ISBE Issues Guidance on Qualifications of Personnel Conducting Medical Reviews

In July 2012, Section 226.840 of the Illinois State Board of Education special education regulations was amended to revise the qualifications of school personnel who may conduct medical reviews. Last week the ISBE issued *Guidelines: Frequently Asked Questions About Qualifications Required of Personnel Conducting Medical Reviews*. The Guidance defines “medical review,” describes how a medical review should be conducted, specifies who may conduct a medical review, clarifies the role of the certified school nurse in the IEP process, and provides suggestions on how school districts can address shortages of certified school nurses.

- Medical Review Defined: ISBE defines a “medical review” as activities resulting in a complete review of a student’s medical and health status to determine whether a health condition is adversely affecting the student’s

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educational performance. The medical review should help determine if the student requires special education or related services such as school nursing services.

- Conducting the Medical Review: According to ISBE, a medical review should consist of:
 - Collecting parent, student and teacher perceptions and concerns about the student's health.
 - Obtaining objective health information from medical or hospital records.
 - Reviewing the data to determine whether additional information is needed (and obtaining that information, if necessary).
 - Reviewing all data to determine what, if any, appropriate nursing services and accommodations or modifications the student requires.
 - Reporting any educationally relevant medical findings to the IEP team. In making these determinations, the certified school nurse is exercising instructional judgment or conducting an educational evaluation.
- Qualifications to Conduct the Medical Review: Beginning July 1, 2013, only the following personnel, including

grandfathered, non-certificated personnel, may conduct a medical review:

- A School Nurse (defined as any registered professional nurse who holds a school service personnel certificate with an endorsement in school nursing, or any non-certificated registered professional nurse who was employed in the school district of current employment before July 1, 1976); or
 - A Physician licensed to practice medication in all of its branches; or
 - A Registered Nurse with a bachelor's degree or higher, or an Advanced Practice Nurse.
- Role of the Certified School Nurse in the IEP Process: ISBE indicates that the certified school nurse should participate in the IEP process as follows:
- Assist in IEP development;
 - Integrate any needed school nursing services into the student's academic or functional goals;
 - Recommend educational interventions, modifications or accommodations;
 - Provide or delegate (as appropriate) nursing

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interventions;

- Recommend health-related goals, including frequency of progress monitoring;
- Recommend specific school health services and school nursing services; and
- Write progress reports and evaluate the effectiveness interventions.

The Guidelines only reference the IEP process; however, we recommend that school districts and special education cooperatives follow the amended ISBE regulation and the new Guidelines for medical reviews and planning meetings under Section 504 as well.

If you have any questions, or need assistance revising your policies or procedures to conform to the amended ISBE regulation and new Guidance, please call one of our attorneys at 630/928-1200 (Oak Brook) or 708/799-6766 (Flossmoor).