

Frequently Asked Questions on 1:1 School Nursing and MH authorized CSN

1. How do I get nursing services for a MassHealth member while they are at school?

The first step is to talk to the school about in-school nursing services.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) oversees nursing in school. School districts may set their own policies as long as they follow state and federal rules. School districts need to give “free appropriate public education” (FAPE) to each qualified person with a disability who is in their jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person’s disability. This is required under federal law. Providing a FAPE may include providing access to in-school nursing services. See DESE requirements for more information. If you have questions about your rights and entitlements under federal education law, see <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents.html>.

A member might not be able to get nursing services while they are in school for the following reasons.

- (1) the member’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) doesn’t support nursing; or
- (2) the IEP supports nursing but the school does not have appropriate staffing.

In either case, the family may use their authorized continuous skilled nursing (CSN) hours to bring a nurse to school. However, the school district has to agree for the CSN nurse to provide services to the member in school. CSN hours available to a family to bring a nurse to school are determined by the annual LTSS assessment, and not by a member’s IEP. A family has the discretion to choose the number of hours of nursing support used in school. If a member uses more hours at school than were assessed by CCM for the school day, it will reduce hours available out of school.

2. What should I do if my child’s school can’t fill 1:1 nursing indicated in my child’s IEP?

MassHealth and CCM do not oversee nursing services provided by the school system and included in an IEP.

If you have any concerns with the nursing services provided in an IEP, you should speak with the school/school district. If you aren’t able to resolve issues with the school/district, you can reach out to the DESE *Problem Resolution System (PRS) Office*.

PRS Office Specialists are familiar with the various rules and regulations of every Massachusetts school system. A PRS Specialist will work with you and the school/district to resolve any issues related to an IEP. They can also help answer any questions you have about the school/district’s responsibility to your family member’s access to education.

PRS Specialists: (Note: The PRS Specialist is unique to each school/district.)

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/specialist.html>

Complaint Information Guide :

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/guide/>

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3. Can CCM Members/Families choose to use their MassHealth authorized CSN hours while the member attends school?

Families can choose when and where to use their CSN hours, including at school. Families are encouraged to discuss this choice with their CCM clinical manager. MassHealth recognizes that using CSN hours at school impacts the number of CSN hours available to the member while not in school. Families may not prefer this approach. MassHealth encourages families to discuss this choice with their CCM clinical manager.

School district cooperation is required if a family wishes to use CSN hours at school. If the school district agrees to allow in-school CSN, the CSN hours may be incorporated into the member's IEP. This will fulfill the school's responsibility to provide nursing. If you use CSN hours at school, you may want to ask the school district to keep searching for a nurse so that CSN hours are only used out of school.

4. If the school provides nursing services, will this impact my MassHealth-approved CSN hours?

CCM members get approval for the number of nursing hours that are medically necessary when there are no other nursing services available. In order to understand when nursing services are available to the member, CCM reviews all sites of care, including services that are provided through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) when the member is in school. CCM determines if there is any duplication between other sites of care and the CSN services that MassHealth authorizes.

Example:

A member attends school five days per week. The school provides a nurse 1.5 hours per day for GI-related interventions that occur while in school, including g-tube feeding. The CCM Clinical Manager will not authorize CSN hours for that task during those school times/days. The CCM Clinical Manager will authorize CSN hours to account for this task if it takes place before or after school.

The authorization will list the total number of CSN hours authorized per week for those weeks the member is in school (subtracting the duplicate interventions as described above) and list the total number of CSN hours authorized per week for those weeks the member is not in school (i.e., holidays, school vacations, summers). These are referred to as "in-school hours" and "out-of-school hours." You should contact CCM if there is a change in in-school or out-of-school hours. They may need to make an adjustment.

5. If I use my MassHealth approved CSN hours in school, will this impact the total number of CSN hours authorized?

If you use MassHealth-approved CSN hours in school, and the school district agrees, the CSN service record will no longer distinguish between 'in school' and 'out of school' hours. You should work with CCM to update the CSN service record as needed to include one number of weekly hours.

6. What do I need to do if I used my MassHealth-approved CSN hours during school this year, but want the school to provide nursing services to the member next year?

Families can raise this issue during their annual IEP meeting with the school. Schools need to update the IEP every year. They will reassess the member for medically necessary in-school nursing services.