

South Carolina Program for Oral Health Screening as of 2008

Summary:

No mandatory dental screening; only recommended to have comprehensive exam by their dentist within 12 months prior to enrollment into Pre-k, Head Start, Kdg or 1st grade.

To receive a screening in school, a signed permission is required.

(Code passed in 2014: Title 44-Health, Chapter 8 Section 44-8-10 that Department of Health and Environmental Control shall implement a targeted community program for dental health education, screening, and treatment referral in the public schools for children in kindergarten, third, seventh, and tenth grades or upon entry into a South Carolina school.

** Code passed in 2014; however, no funding has been provided for implementation.)*

Ages and Grades:

Parents/guardians are encouraged to establish a medical and dental home for their child entering early childhood development (**pre-k**), **Head Start, kindergarten, or first grade** and have a comprehensive health assessment performed by the student's health care practitioner, an eye examination by an eye doctor, and a comprehensive dental examination by the student's dentists within 12 months prior to enrollment in school for the first time.

Assessment v Exam v Screening:

Students should receive school-based screening for oral disease according to the S. C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) School Screening Recommendations. Dental screeners are limited to school nurses, dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants operating under general supervision. A signed permission is required to have in school screening.

How does "requirement" function:

No "requirement" for screening.

School nurses are to organize dental screening programs for students in the recommended grade(s).

School based option?

Parents/guardians may opt out of having their child participate in the school-based screening program.

Students who are seen by their dentist on a regular basis may submit a copy of the examination results to be included in the school health record in lieu of participating in the school-based screening program.

Follow-up care/support:

School nurses monitor the dental referral through completion, providing assistance to the student's parent/guardian based on available resources. Nurses should assist

parents/guardians with establishing a medical and dental home for their child if the child does not have one. Treatment urgency and referral status is based on the presence of decay, pain, swelling, bleeding, infection, and/or soft tissue lesions. And dictates the time frame and approach to be used in communicating with parents/guardians.

Student's dental provider is to complete referral form and parent/guardian returns completed form to school nurse.

Data Collection/Outcomes:

State conducts dental screenings every 5 years as part of oral health surveillance program. Oral screenings findings documented in each student's individual health record. All parents/guardians are sent notification of screening results.

Referrals are tracked to determine outcomes, with program management goals set to assess the percent of referrals completed. The registered nurse (RN) assigned responsibility for each school population should develop and implement plans for improving referral completion rates. If a licensed practical nurse (LPN) has been assigned to a school for daily health services, the LPN should work with her/his RN clinical supervisor in the development of the improvement plan.

(See attached Screening Template for Data Collection used by HPS)

Anecdotal Feedback/Misc.:

School based screening and referral program success has been built upon the shoulders and work scope of the school nurse.

Practice Act Regulations enabling the dental hygienist to deliver preventive care via general supervision has show outcomes of: "100% success rate in connecting the urgent needs to care over the past 4 years. Additionally, HPS has eliminated the disparity between black and white children that have sealants in the first 5 years of its program". The state program saw over 20,000 children in 2014 and HPS provided 99% of the services.

Links:

listing of SC DHEC School Dental Prevention Programs visit:

<http://www.dhec.sc.gov/health/mch/oral/school.htm>

South Carolina Code of Laws Title 40 - Professions and Occupations, Chapter 15 Dentists, Dental Hygienists and Dental Technicians.

<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/Dentistry/>