

School-Based Health Centers

FAQs Answered for Health Care Providers in Arkansas



What is a school-based health center (SBHC)?

- A healthcare facility located in or next to a school
- Presents a coordinated model for health and education
- Provides students access to high-quality health care where they are—a school environment that is safe, convenient, and accessible
- SBHCs have been shown to reduce barriers to learning, such as absenteeism, issues with acute and chronic illnesses, mental health issues, and trauma
- SBHCs make it easier for students to learn and teachers to teach, without unnecessarily interrupting students' classroom time

Do SBHCs take business away from local providers?

- No. SBHCs allow local providers to provide health services to children who may not otherwise be able to seek medical care outside of school due to barriers such as lack of transportation or working parents
- Providers may serve as primary care physicians in both a referral capacity and in the direct provision of services within a SBHC
- SBHCs maintain working relationships with the physician of a child's medical home to ensure individual health plans are executed effectively and efficiently

How do I develop a partnership with a SBHC?

- Schools extend invitations to providers in their communities to gauge interest and request proposals for participation in SBHCs. Some items schools will consider in developing provider partnerships include:
 - ✓ Whether providers are willing to serve all students regardless of ability to pay
 - ✓ The length of time the provider has been in business in Arkansas and/or in other states
 - ✓ The amount, type, and frequency of data sharing between the SBHC and providers
 - ✓ The specific responsibilities of the provider/billing agent
 - ✓ Requirements for self-auditing or compliance monitoring
 - ✓ A schedule for the provider/billing agent to submit claims or required reports and penalties for non-compliance

- ✓ A clause in the proposed contract for mutual or unilateral discontinuance

How will we serve students who don't have health insurance?

- SBHCs may consider billing parents/guardians based on a sliding fee scale
- SBHC staff may assist families of students without insurance with ARKids/Medicaid enrollment

Are there additional costs associated with my participation in a SBHC?

- SBHCs should be fully equipped with district-owned operational supplies, clinic equipment, and medical supplies
- Provider assumes costs associated with medical personnel salaries

Will I provide services at the SBHC? Every SBHC is uniquely tailored to fit the needs of the community. Some schools offer clinic space on their campuses, or they may work with you to arrange "linked" services, in which case the school transports students to your clinical space. Additionally, you may choose to arrange telehealth services via a closed-circuit television or phone.

How often, and during what hours will I be at the clinic?

The School-Based Health Alliance of Arkansas recommends that SBHCs in Arkansas provide medical services a minimum of twelve hours per week with a physical health provider (MD, DO, APRN or PA) on campus, including some before or after school hours at least one day each week when school is in session.

Will I have enough patients to have a full schedule?

Considering the needs of students, SBHC Coordinators work closely with providers over time to ensure that their schedules are full when they are on campus.

How will I keep claims documentation and individually identifiable student data? Student privacy and safety is a priority in SBHCs. All SBHCs have written policies in place to formalize clinic procedures, including those that providers must follow for referral processes, documentation, crisis management, billing, and grievances. Be sure to review these procedures including HIPAA, FERPA, and state confidentiality laws with your staff. Best practices include conducting short trainings and/or creating materials to share information related to such laws broadly and accurately.