**Q+A’S – Wednesday 17th June:** School Health and Trauma Informed Practice

School Health and Trauma Informed Practice: Sharon White, CEO, SAPHNA

**Q+A’S:**

**How do we convince parents to send children to school if they are scared of Covid, but they are at risk of Domestic abuse or safeguarding?**

In terms of children returning to school DfE issued guidance last week, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

This includes information/support for parents/carers. There is also an additional plethora of fab resources including for CYP themselves via our website <https://saphna.co/?s=covid>

For those who we know are at risk of Domestic abuse then it would be up to the involved professionals to either ensure, as far as possible, compliance with any child protection plan and to escalate concerns accordingly. For those not on a plan then involved professionals should use their skills, experience and resources e.g motivational interviewing, brief intervention, personal safety plans etc. with CYP and/or parents as appropriate, to encourage school attendance.

From September, DfE have advised that non-attendance will incur fines so whilst not always a recommended tool, it may be useful in some particular circumstances, to remind parents and older YP of this

**What website can we use to have our say?**

Please do use our website to raise any issues, shine a light on best practice and influence our work <https://saphna.co/get-involved/have-your-say/>

**Going forward do you feel that we will be able to get back into schools into September to undertake the face to face Healthy child screening? Or perhaps will there be some push back from schools to limit visits from outside agencies?**

Schools will need to work to the recently issued guidance<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools> which encourages health protection in all forms e.g immunisations, health education and, therefore, the need for external services. Additionally, NHSE/PHE/DHSC and DfE are aware of the potential logistics and are working together to produce further guidance. However, School and public health nurses will also have to use their SCPHN leadership skills to help schools feel safe to do so and, in partnership, work through any tensions/barriers

**What is the role of a staff nurse in the HCP?**

‘School nurses are responsible for co-ordinating a team to deliver public health services for school-aged children throughout the year. The team may be made up of different grades of staff and professionals, with varied skills and knowledge. It is important that the skill mix is appropriate to meet the needs of the local school age population and that team members have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, with robust job descriptions to support these roles’; <file:///C:/Users/User/AppData/Local/Temp/School-Nurses-Toolkit-2017.pdf>

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/children-and-young-people/school-nursing>

**Do you feel that the emotional health issues for children and young people now becoming evident from this pandemic, has identified the lack of school nurses nationally to support children and young people post Covid?**

YES! We were already acutely aware of the rising need in CYP emotional and mental health needs, School nursing all too frequently ‘holding’ many of these until CAMHS referrals could be taken up and/or those that failed to meet the threshold criteria. During COVID 19, we have, however, also seen a cohort of CYP struggle less with EHWB needs due to the removal of the causes such as schools, friendships, bullying, peer pressure etc., and for some of our CYP with additional needs e.g autism, they too have benefited with regulation and routine. This does not detract from the huge number of CYP/families now coming forward for additional support and who we expect to be swamped with on the return to school. We **do not have adequate resources** to meet this growing need.

**Carers who are shielding or have other children who are vulnerable are not sending the children to school. Is it considered safe for people shielding?**

Since my webinar this has moved on. Shielding will be paused from August 2nd. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

There is further guidance here with the main messaging that we/schools should work hard to get as many children back into school as possible. A useful paper from the RCPCH supports this further. <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/covid-19-research-evidence-summaries>

**I have heard of teachers being seriously traumatised and fearful, did any of them seek advice from the service?**

Yes. School nursing services have, and continue to spend an inordinate amount of time supporting our school staff colleagues through some very difficult challenges. For the most part our schools have remained open throughout, particularly hard when most were home from work. Impact on themselves, their own children/wider family, worries re those most vulnerable not attending school, food poverty/free school meals, creating safe environments/health and safety environments, missed exams/curriculum just a few issues they have had to juggle and, for many, manifesting in their own EHWB needs.

Whilst supervision is, in the main, well embedded, for clinical and safeguarding for NHS Providers and Social Care, it is still a relatively new concept for education colleagues. This is something we are encouraging they access and implement across all staff groups

**How are we supporting the mental health of children through the school nursing team?**

There are a fabulous number of interventions being offered by School health services throughout COVID19. These range from 1:1 virtual/ftf brief intervention therapy to group health education sessions vis virtual medium. They are also providing indirect support to parents, carers and school staff either as a single or multi agency approach. A selection of case studies is available on our website to demonstrate some of this, more are frequently uploaded <https://saphna.co/news/covid-19-a-selection-of-case-studies-to-demonstrate-how-school-nurses-are-optimising-the-use-of-technology-with-some-of-our-most-vulnerable-children-young-people-and-families/>

**Is there a timescale around seeing looked after children face to face?**

This is referenced in the NHSE Community health services prioritisation plan. No.10.

There is no timescale determined; this will need to be determined locally and within national best practice guidance.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0145-COVID-19-prioritisation-within-community-health-services-1-April-2020.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-looked-after-children--2>

**School Nursing has now seen a long period of staff shortage, recruitment issues, reduced capacity. What do you consider as a solution to the commissioning of the service?**

Oh how I wish I had the answer to that one! Sadly, no golden bullet and, tragically, despite short-term increased funding opportunities during COVID 19, it has been nationally suggested by our LGA partners, that any increased funds will be allocated to social care…

However, alongside the other Professional organisations, SAPHNA work tirelessly with all those who influence and impact commissioning, including at Governmental level. We are currently collating the aforementioned case studies as exemplars of best practice and these are currently being used *ad nauseum* at those strategic level conversations by and with our partners across the health, education, social care and third sector community.

We are also commissioned, again, by NHSE North to deliver critical leadership training (3rd year running) to safeguarding leads, including School and public health nursing, to enable those at a more local strategic level to better understand their role in influencing and driving forward commissioning; we have seen some fabulous outcomes following this training. Do contact me at [info@saphna.co](mailto:info@saphna.co) for further details.

We and many of the workforce are also part of the current NMC review of SCPHN standards, working hard to ensure that Leadership remains a key and pivotal component of our education and training requirements.

We are actively seeking research opportunities and have been/are involved in a number of research projects which help us to evidence the impact of our unique work.

On a more local level, all of us working in health have a role to play in politics; it is one of the NMC 10 key standards of proficiency in the context of specialist community public health nursing to have ‘influence on policy affecting health’

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/standards/nmc-standards-of-proficiency-for-specialist-community-public-health-nurses.pdf>

**What is your view on the substantial redeployment of school nurses in recent weeks in many areas and how has this impacted on school nurse’s ability to meet the needs of the young people they interact with at a time when they are more vulnerable than ever?**

This was a bad call! School and public health nurses should never have n=been redeployed in the first place, however, it is somewhat understandable that this happened. We have worked hard with NHSEi, DHSC, PHE and others to have this changed. The most recent version of the Community Health services prioritisation plan does state ‘a restoration’ of services is now necessary. From our intelligence we think most have now returned to practice. However, for those who have not, and, indeed, for any that you are aware of, then please do raise with [Viv.Bennett@phe.gov.uk](mailto:Viv.Bennett@phe.gov.uk) , [Wendy.Nicholson@phe.gov.uk](mailto:Wendy.Nicholson@phe.gov.uk). And/or [Ruth.May@nhs.net](mailto:Ruth.May@nhs.net)

who are speaking and influencing these areas directly.

Clearly, reduced workforce has impacted the ability to offer in-reach to many children and families sadly.

School and public health nurses have never been needed more than now!

**There is a possibility that schools may be open during the 6-week summer holiday period, how will school nurses be able to support this given that many school nurses are subject to term time contracts?**

There are very few SN who have term time contracts any more. There are also very few schools now remaining open, so this is less of a challenge.

**Was school nursing consulted during the preparation phase for schools re-opening?**

We were represented at these conversations by PHE, however, Professional organisations were not directly consulted, probably in part due to very tight timescales. It would have been an invaluable opportunity to be involved.

**Return to School planning - can school nurses support children who might find it particularly difficult to return to school due to COVID-19? If so, how we can refer to your service? Assuming the child/young person is not known to you already.**

I have partially answered this question above. Any school-aged child can be referred to their local School health service. Most areas can be easily googled.

**How do you think the procedures carried out in some schools who have returned to shorter days, will affect the children? Such as, for example, not being able to move from their seats, having to clean the desks and chairs 3+ times per day etc.**

It remains to be seen. One train of thought is that this will have a negative impact on their development, learning and behaviour; another quite the opposite. The most recent thinking is that the benefits of a changed school environment far outweigh the risks of ongoing absence and home education.

School health services are working hard with our schools so we might all offer a trauma informed approach to our children, staff and families; this, in turn, will enable and facilitate children to feel safe and helped to heal, As part of this, SAPHNA have secured a small grant from the amazing Burdett Trust for Nursing and have commissioned our friend and colleague, Dr Pooky Knightsmith of Creative education <https://elearning.creativeeducation.co.uk/>

To develop and deliver bespoke e-learning for 2,000 of the School health service. Further details can be found here: <https://saphna.co/news/the-school-nursing-workforce-for-for-the-new-future/>

**As a Public Health Staff Nurse what training is recommended and available to support children with their emotional health as they return to school?**

Please see previous response as a great starter for 10!

**I am a Student School Nurse (SCPHN). I'm currently redeployed, my course resumes at the end of July. I really appreciate this presentation. I look forward to getting back to my School Nurse team to support children and young people. I feel that we do need to raise the profile of the School Nurse role more.**

Wholly agree! I am sorry that many SCPHN students have had their courses impacted and do hope they are back on track asap; we are working with our colleagues to help with this.

If you and/or your fellow students would like to become more involved in raising the profile of our profession, then do get in touch via <https://saphna.co/get-involved/>

**I would also encourage you all to take time to listen to this interview, conducted as part of the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, with SAPHNA’s EHWB expert and SN national lead extraordinaire, Sally Ann Sutton, which further outlines the roles and responsibilities of School and Public Health Nursing and how they have particularly shone brightly during COVID 19; something we are very proud of!** <https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=621991762005934&id=104731641246263>

And finally, thank you so much to the 821 folks who took time out of frantic schedules to listen to my presentation and to NHSEi Safeguarding team for the wonderful Safeguarding fortnight and all that they do to help us all safeguard and protect our children, young people and families; something I am passionate about!

Please do get in touch if I can help in any other way [Sharon@saphna.co](mailto:Sharon@saphna.co)