

<b>Contact details for respondent</b>	
Name	
Job title	Professional adviser for school nurses and public health
Do you represent an organisation?  (if so, name of organisation and type: e.g. voluntary, public body, private company).	Amicus-CPHVA (Community Practitioners and Health Visitors Association)
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	<b>Which area of the review are you responding to? (please mark X)</b>
Prevention strand	
Review of disabled children	
Strategy for youth services	X
Review of high cost, high harm families	

The term 'school nurse' is a generic one which refers to any nurse who works with young people in the community with health needs.

The CPHVA recently undertook a survey of members and asked for their job title and what they do. From the responses it is clear that many modern school nurses are an integral part of youth services, and this must be taken into account when designing future services.

Here are a few examples of jobs:

- Based in multi-agency initial assessment team for safeguarding,
- Primary mental health worker
- Community Nurse for vulnerable children
- Family planning nurse
- Specialist nurse youth offending service
- Health adviser, youth offending team
- Specialist nurse for Children Looked After

All school nurses were involved with delivering tier 1 CAMHS support, and many had undertaken further training, to deliver tier 2 work. It is clear that the CAMHS service would buckle under the strain if school nurses did not deliver this work.

Studies have shown that excluded children have a higher need for mental and emotional support, sexual health services and cope less well than other children with minor or chronic illness. Furthermore, disabled children and other vulnerable children are often excluded from society.

Modern school nurses work in multi-agency teams which deliver youth services, both within school and in drop-in youth services. However one of the questions you pose is;

'What can be done to improve the ability of universal provision to identify and provide a service to those with greater needs?

Modern school nurses are trained in public health to assess health needs in schools and the community, to identify gaps and to oversee the provision of a service. It is their constant complaint that they are completely undervalued in this role; not enough qualified school nurses are employed, and the work which they can readily do, is going undone. Meanwhile the government wrings its hands and says 'What can we do?' and sets about re-inventing the wheel (Polly Toynbe's words; and she is right!)

You can gauge their frustration by these responses:

- 'school nurses have so much potential but resources are limited'
- 'we are not viewed highly by other professionals'
- I feel undervalued; financial pressures of PCT, and how are we to safeguard profession within locality when services slashed/critical level?
- No recognition of our role within public health
- Stress of unrealistic workload 'no one cares'
- There needs to be support for one whole time equivalent nurse per secondary school and its cluster of primaries (as per govt guidance)
- .We need to influence spending to recognise school nursing as a priority and valuable service in order to increase our meagre numbers so that we can actually do something really effective rather than just scratching the surface and gaining little job satisfaction as a result. Our potential value is recognised in so many documents (CNO's report, Choosing Health etc) but the resources never seem to be there to fulfil the ideas.

The evidence base around school nursing is limited, as we are not academics and this is not what we are trained to do. Public health departments have failed to find and present the evidence in a form which the government can access, but some work by Diane De Bell and others is beginning to address this.

Many young people resent being involved with social services, but young people have no such qualms in being involved with health personnel. Young people do not always have fixed views, so services need to be ready to change. They do however work best when young people trust them, and many statutory services; such as health and education are highly trusted by young people, even excluded ones, and youth services work best when integrated into these. The National Healthy Schools programme has many strands which cannot be ignored when providing youth services, such as working to prevent bullying and homophobia. Youth workers need to be trained in these principles and public health principles.

The principles which should guide future service provision should be the public health ones of equity; accessibility; acceptability; quality; validity; etc

School nurses work well with the third sector, and we would like an extension of Homestart to work with families with older children.