



Do EHRs Make the Grade for School Health Centers?

From virtual to hybrid to condensed in-person classes, school administrators, teachers, and staff need to keep track of students across more formats than ever before. With multiple instructional formats come more data and records to monitor and maintain.

From elementary to higher education, many schools are turning to electronic health records (EHRs) to securely share health information, comply with federal program requirements, help students manage chronic conditions, and monitor the progress of health initiatives.

As more educational institutions work to improve student health and safety, EHRs will serve as an integral part of the technology used to achieve these objectives.

How EHRs Can Help Educational Health Centers Coordinate Care

EHRs function as a digital version of a patient's chart, which can be accessed, updated, and shared digitally. Today, 9 out of 10 office-based physicians use EHRs to improve patient engagement, reduce costs, and increase patient safety and health outcomes. These records are typically integrated with an engagement portal where patients can message their providers, book appointments, and review test results.



While we most often think of healthcare services in a clinic or hospital setting, educational health centers also provide critical, age-appropriate healthcare services to students. Children spend close to 1,200 hours at school each year on average; that's approximately 20% of the 6,000 waking hours each year. College and university students spend an even more significant portion of their time on and around campus.

Educators, administrators, and health center staff need to be able to coordinate care effectively and quickly for students. Doing so requires up-to-date information about the student's contact information, medical history, insurance coverage, and healthcare providers. Old-fashioned systems like telephones, email, paper forms, and faxes leave gaps open to miscommunication and interpretation. EHRs can help staff ensure students receive the services they need.



Improve the Accuracy, Security, and Accessibility of Student Health Records

With each new school year comes more paperwork. From immunization records to medical releases, these forms must be organized and updated regularly. While many educational institutions have moved to make at least some of these forms digital, it's rare if they're easily searchable or updated.

With an EHR and Patient Portal, each student will have his or her own record that can be securely accessed by the appropriate parties. This is especially important for record-keeping and federal program requirements. For example, students, —particularly student athletes— may be required to have a medical exam with lab testing from a healthcare provider. With EHRs, school healthcare staff can collect releases from guardians, request the needed health status markers from providers, and receive them electronically. Otherwise, the entire process could involve multiple phone calls, faxes, emails, and physical mail to collect the information needed for the federal requirements.

EHRs also help facilitate seamless insurance eligibility coordination, particularly for college students living away from home and managing their own care. For appointments with onsite physicians, health center staff can verify the patient's insurance eligibility ahead of time, review co-payments, and note any out-of-network alerts.

With EHRs, school healthcare staff can collect releases from guardians, request the needed health status markers from providers, and receive them electronically.



9 out of 10

Office-based physicians use EHRs to improve patient engagement, reduce costs, and increase patient safety, and health outcomes

1,200 hrs

of a child's year is spent at school, on average

15-18%

of children in the United States have a chronic condition

Monitor Student Health Markers and Manage Chronic Conditions

EHRs help schools keep track of screenings, referrals, immunizations, on-campus injuries, and even sports-related injuries such as concussions. These records are also used to track outbreaks of the flu, COVID-19, and other viruses. Nurses can monitor how many students have been dismissed from classes, their symptoms, and report that information to the appropriate public authorities.

An estimated [15 to 18% of children in the United States have a chronic condition](#), such as asthma, diabetes, cerebral palsy, and sickle cell anemia. Many of these children have multiple conditions to manage, and [the percentage of children living with chronic conditions](#) is on the rise. By using an EHR, health center staff can follow individual health care plans for these students, [track administration of medications](#), document any changes in their condition, and share with guardians. In the event of a critical health episode, health center staff can access care instructions from the student's provider with the guardian's permission. This allows for a continuum of care where the school nurse is able to monitor the student's needs while in school.



With EHRs, health center staff can follow individual health care plans for these students, track administration of medications, document any changes in their condition, and share them with guardians.



...staff can identify virus hot spots on campus and work to prevent or minimize additional outbreaks by implementing quarantines, screenings, temperature readings...

Increase Student Safety and Well-Being Through Trend Analysis

School staff can leverage data from EHRs to create more effective and personalized health initiatives for their student population. For example, healthcare staff could create a program on maintaining prescription adherence at home during breaks, on weekends, or during summer vacation. School nurses can also talk to students with chronic conditions about how to control their symptoms and inform their educators about the warning signs to be aware of.

Insights can be gleaned from your EHR on potential improvements for on-campus safety. If the health center staff notice an up-tick of injuries in a particular place on campus, they can share this information with maintenance to make improvements. Similarly, staff can identify virus hot spots on campus (e.g. specific dorms) and work to prevent or minimize additional outbreaks by implementing quarantines, screenings, temperature readings, and communication plans for guardians. And identifying gaps in immunizations and vaccines can help lower the risk of infection (and possible ensuing legal action) from diseases such as measles, mumps, and meningitis.

RXNT's Software Can Help Keep Your Students Healthy and Safe

Are you making improvements to your school's health center? We know that keeping students safe and healthy is a top priority for educational institutions across the country. RXNT's integrated EHR solution provides all of the functionality your school needs to ensure the safety and well-being of your students.