

SCHOOL NURSE DAY RECOGNIZES IMPROVED HEALTH AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

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ASHEVILLE - National School Nurse Day is celebrated on Wednesday, May 10, 2017, and MAHEC is grateful for the many wonderful school nurses that play a vital role in our community.

"School nurses do not get enough credit for the crucial and, in some cases life-saving, work they do on a daily basis," says Dr. Jeffery Heck, MAHEC President and CEO. "Every day, parents place the health of their children in the hands of a school nurse, and MAHEC is extremely proud of the skill, hard work, and genuine care each and every one of the nurses display."

Children today face more chronic illnesses than ever before. In the 2015-2016 school year, there were 28,703 students enrolled in Asheville City and Buncombe County Schools for whom there were 9,724 known different identified health conditions, such as ADD/ADHD, emotional/behavioral or psychiatric disorders, asthma, severe allergies, seizures, diabetes, and more. The school nurse is vital as some children may not have access to any other health professional. School nurses not only have to know how to treat each individual child's health need, but also train teachers, staff, and coaches that work directly with the child to assist in their care and in case of an emergency.

"School nursing is about keeping students healthy, in their seats, and safe so they can learn," says Alice Elio, MSN, RN, NCSN, school nurse supervisor for MAHEC. "If we can keep their conditions monitored and under control, they can spend more time in the classroom actively learning. They cannot do well in school if they are distracted or absent because of health concerns. Because of this, school nurses not only improve health, but also learning outcomes."

School nurses in Asheville City and Buncombe County Schools have extended support and resources in caring for students through MAHEC, including access to additional dental and medical consultations to ensure all students are being cared for optimally. MAHEC also provides continuing education courses for nurses so they can better address the increasing student population with a need for specialized care.

For more information about school nurses in our community, please visit www.mahec.net/patient-information/school-nurses.