



# Goals and Guidelines for the Collective Student Health in the City of Gothenburg

An un-official translation of 'Mål och riktlinjer för den samlade elevhälsan i Göteborgs Stad'

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# Introduction

In this document, Goals and guidelines for the collective student health in the City of Gothenburg, emphasis is put on the importance of the student health working with preventive measures and being health promoting, and that it should constitute a support process in the work with the students' development towards the education's goals, which comprise both knowledge and values. Furthermore, it is emphasized that the student health should be characterized by a student perspective and a carefully developed cooperation between the concerned professions. The city district committees and the education committee shall complete these goals and guidelines for the healthcare carried out within the student health, by guaranteeing a management system and establishing the organization's overall goals for quality and patient safety.

The collective student health's purpose is to work with different specialists to ensure all students' right to learning and development. The city district committees and the education committee, in their capacity as school heads and caregivers, have the responsibility to create adequate conditions for the collective student health to carry out their commission. The organization and the allocation of resources of the student health should be based on the students' needs.

The work with students' health regards all the factors that affect children both inside and outside of school. The students' social environment, different needs and conditions, and participation in and influence over their own environment and situation are part of this work. Students' health also regards how the work with their learning is organized, what access the students have to adults, regardless of their position, and what competences these adults have to meet the varying needs of the students.

## Background

The city executive board has given the city executive office the commission to revise Goals and guidelines for the collective student health in the City of Gothenburg, which was drawn up during the autumn of 1999 and Quality systems within the school health in the City of Gothenburg (Sw. Kvalitetssystem inom skolhälsovården i Göteborg), drawn up in 2003. There are several reasons for this revision. One reason is that the above-mentioned documents are limited to concerning the school healthcare while the city executive board has expressed that the student health should be coordinated and that the revision shall result in documents that concern the entire collective student health. Another reason is that the national regulations in this area have changed considerably, especially through the new Education Act (SFS 2010:800).

The concept of student health was introduced in the school statutes with the new Education Act (SFS 2010:800). It says in the law that the student health should include medical, psychological, psychosocial and special educational measures. Furthermore, it is stated that the student health primarily shall work preventively and be health promoting, and that it shall support the students' development towards the goals. The student health shall contribute to the creation of environments that promote learning, development and health. Emphasis is put on cooperation within the student health as well as between the staff of the student health and other groups of staff. The different competences shall work together to contribute to the creation of environments that promote learning, development and health.

## Purpose

The guidelines for the work within the collective student health are supposed to contribute to ensuring all students' right to equal education. The point of departure is the schools' mission to offer a good work environment in general and particularly a stimulating learning environment that promotes learning, development and health.

Some of the steering documents for the student health together with general principles for the work within the student health and its organization and division of responsibilities are presented in this document.

## Steering Documents for the Student Health

Sweden has undertaken to realize the UN Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC). The CRC formulates a universal definition of what rights should be the same for all children in the world, and has had an impact on the steering documents for the student health. The Salamanca statement, which regards how to organize education for students in need of special support in the best way, has also been important to how regulations in the field have been drawn up. In this section, national and municipal steering documents that have bearing on the student health work are presented.

### National Level

On a national level, the student health is controlled by the Education Act, the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act, the Health and Medical Service Act, the curricula and regulations and general advice (Sw. allmänna råd) from the Swedish Work Environment Authority, the National Agency for Education and the National Board of Health and Welfare, among others.

School doctors and school nurses operate under two different regulations, i.e. the Education Act and the Health and Medical Service Act. The same goes for registered psychologists and psychotherapists when they evaluate, care for or treat students or offer preventive measures. For the other school staff, it is the Education Act that is of importance for the work within the student health.

Among the regulations from the National Board of Health and Welfare relevant in this context are the regulation on quality management systems and patient security within the healthcare (SOSFS 2005:12), Lex Maria (SOSFS 2005:28), the regulation on the handling of information and journal-keeping within the healthcare (SOSFS 2008:14) and the regulation on vaccination of children (SOSFS 2006:22). The National Board of Health and Welfare has also drawn up guidelines for the school healthcare which were published in 2004.

Of the general advice from the National Agency for Education (Sw. Skolverkets allmänna råd), the advice to promote equality and prevent discrimination, harassment and abusive treatment (SKOLFS 2009:38) and the general guidelines for the work with action programmes (SKOLFS 2008:25) should be specially mentioned in this context.

## Municipal Level

The City of Gothenburg's communal mission for the municipality's schools and preschools, the city's budget documents, regulations for the committees, delegation order and Västbus' guidelines are locally drawn up documents which are also steering documents for the work. For guidance, there is also The method handbook for the school healthcare (Sw. Skolhälsovårdens metodhandbok)<sup>1</sup>, where, among other things, the basic programme for health monitoring is included.

## The Student Health's Organization and Division of Responsibilities

The head of school and the principal have the overall responsibility for the work at school and for ensuring that the school as a whole is aiming towards reaching the national goals. A part of their commission is to organize the work teams, the student health and the school's other resources so that the students receive the special support and the help they need. To complement the pedagogical work and to guarantee the competences described in the Education Act, welfare

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<sup>1</sup> [www.goteborg.se/skolhalsan](http://www.goteborg.se/skolhalsan)

officers, psychologists, remedial teachers and special pedagogues, school nurses and school doctors should be a part of the collective student health in the City of Gothenburg.

The student health is based on cooperation between multiple functions. Therefore, a clear division of responsibilities is essential. This section describes the responsibilities of the city district committees, the education committee, the principals and the student health.

## Municipal Support to Head of Schools

The purpose of the City of Gothenburg's central support to the student health is to support the work with systematic quality work, follow-up and evaluation, and to coordinate municipal measures within the student health field and be responsible for support measures directed at the professions of the student health. The central support for the medical measures also consists of a school health consultant, a coordinating nurse and a coordinating nurse for the compulsory special schools. These have an overall responsibility to support the work development, the work specific in-service training, the guarantee of quality, the follow-up and the evaluation. They are also responsible for the City of Gothenburg's Method handbook for school healthcare (Sw. Metodhandbok för skolhälsovård). The central support is for both municipal and independent head of schools.

## The City District Committees and the Education Committees

According to, among others, the Education Act, the municipality's tasks shall be carried out by the city district committees and the education committee (view the regulations for the City of Gothenburg's city district committees and the education committee). This means that the concerned committees have the responsibility to ensure that there is a student health to the extent and with the content that is described in for example the Education Act. This also means that the committees are responsible for the duties of the municipality in its capacity as caregiver within the student health.

The duties as caregiver mean that the city district committees and the education committee, in their own areas of responsibility, should guarantee a management system, establish the overall quality and patient security goals and continuously follow-up and evaluate those goals.

It is also the caregiver's task to appoint an administration manager. The administration manager is responsible for, within in the frames of the caregiver's management system, drawing up, establishing and documenting the routines for how the systematic quality work continuously should be carried out to be able to manage, follow-up and develop the work. If the administration

manager for the medical measures appointed within a committee's area of responsibility lacks education within medical service and healthcare, a person with such an education should also be appointed to carry the medical responsibility. In the City of Gothenburg, this person is called a medical director (Sw. medicinskt ledningsansvarig), MLA. The MLA is also responsible for Lex Maria reports. The caregiver's and the administration manager's responsibilities are regulated in the National Board of Health and Welfare's regulation on quality management systems and patient security within the healthcare (SOSFS 2005:12).

## The Principal

The principal should lead and coordinate the pedagogical work and decide on the school's internal organization. The principal has a special responsibility for students in need of special support. If there is a risk that a student will not reach the minimum knowledge requirements or if the student shows other difficulties in his or her school situation, the principal shall see to it that the needs are evaluated and that special support is given. This should generally be done in consultation with the student health.

The principal shall also lead and coordinate the work of the student health at the school. This means that the principal is responsible for organizing the school in such a way that the students receive the support they are entitled to. In the individually focused work, the student health has a special responsibility to remove obstacles for every individual student's learning and development. The generally focused tasks concern the students' work environment and the school values, such as the work to prevent harassment.

### The student health

The student health consists of several occupational groups, which contribute with different competences. The different professions that are part of the collective student health should be given continuous in-service training related to the special competence that they contribute with.

The special pedagogical competence includes knowledge of children's and adolescents' learning from the perspective of the behavioural scientific, the sociological, the medical and the linguistic fields of research. It also includes special knowledge when it comes to identifying, analysing and participating in the work with removing obstacles and reasons for difficulties in teaching and learning environments, and carrying out pedagogical evaluations and analysing students' difficulties on an organizational, group and individual level.

The registered psychological competence includes knowledge of children's and adolescents' development and conditions for learning, neuropsychology and transformation processes. It also

includes knowledge of life crises and their relations to earlier life experiences, and knowledge of communication and cooperation between people on a group and organizational level. Being a registered psychologist entails an independent occupational responsibility regarding for example choice of measure, method and work instruments.

The school welfare officer, who is a social worker or has an equivalent education, has the psychosocial competence, which includes knowledge of behavioural science, sociology and law with special focus on children, adolescents and family. The school welfare officer's competence includes psychosocial work and work with social change processes, and he or she works from a holistic point of view on an individual, group and organizational level.

The school nurse and the school doctor have the medical competence which includes sciencebased knowledge of children's and adolescents' development and growth, together with knowledge of health promoting work in a physical, psychological and social environment. The school nurse should also have the competence to, with a holistic view of children's and adolescents' physical, psychological and social needs, be able to help individuals, families and groups to identify and prevent ill health. He or she should also have the competence to be able to assess, plan and carry out health promoting steps. The school doctor shall, in addition to the above mentioned competences, have the competence to be able to diagnose and treat illnesses and prevent health problems.

## The Student Health Work

The student health should be health promoting, work preventively and be investigative.

### Student Health, A task for the Entire School

There should be a carefully developed cooperation between the different occupational groups at the school. Learning, health and school environment are closely connected, which shows that the same factors that are essential to students' learning and development, are also essential to their health and general well-being. It is not possible to separate the teaching from the other work at school or from the school's environment. All the work and all the activities in school together constitute the environment in which the students' learning and development take place. This means that the different occupational groups in the school cannot work separately without integrating their different work into an entirety. A good general environment is the first step in the work towards giving special support and creating a sense of community and participation for all students.



## Individually and Generally Focused Measures

In the individually focused work, the student health has a special responsibility to remove obstacles for each student's learning and development. The primary task is to constitute a support process for principals and teachers in their planning of the work with the students' learning. The student health shall guide the staff, take part in the work with action programmes, have a network of specialists and participate in the work outside of the school, but also advise, evaluate, support and treat students and keep contact with their parents. The student health needs to have competences in various fields to be able to provide students, parents and staff with adequate support.

The more generally focused tasks where the participation of the student health is important regard the students' work environment, the school values, such as the work with preventing harassment and education regarding tobacco, alcohol and other drugs and also other lifestyle related ill health, equality and sex education, etc. The student health has a special responsibility to monitor that the school contributes to the creation of good and safe conditions during childhood and adolescence.

## Accessibility

The students in the schools of Gothenburg shall have access to a student health that comprises all of the student health's different occupational groups. The staff can organizationally belong to a public administration, a school or the service can be bought. The committees shall ensure:

- that students, when needed, shall be offered a meeting with a welfare officer or a psychologist within three working days. Matters that are regarded as acute should be taken care of promptly.
- that there is enough staff for the special educational measures to enable the student health's work to be implemented in pedagogical work and also enough to be able to work with health promotion.
- that the medical measures are organized so that health check-ups and simple health services can be carried out in accordance with the basic programme in The method handbook for the school healthcare (Sw. Skolhälsovårdens metodhandbok). The allocation of resources for school nurses and school doctors shall be adequate with regards to the suggested basic programme and the areas special need of resources. A fulltime school nurse (working full time during the school year with intermissions during the winter and summer holidays, a so called "uppehållstjänst") per 500 students and a full time doctor per 5000 students is recommended.

Every student shall be offered at least three health check-up visits during the nine-year compulsory school or the compulsory special school, of which one can be carried out in preschool, and at least one visit in high school or special high school. A visit includes general health controls, specific health check-ups and health talks. In The method handbook for the school healthcare (Sw. Skolhälsovårdens metodhandbok) there is a Basic programme for health monitoring (Sw. Basprogram för hälsoövervakning), which contains a compilation of when during the school time the visits should take place and what those visits at a minimum should contain in the City of Gothenburg. The visits as well as the student health in general should be characterized by a health promoting work manner.

## Evaluations

Everybody working in school has a responsibility to be attentive to students that are in need of special support measures and to inform the principal about these needs. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the student's need of special support is evaluated. A complete evaluation can call for cooperation between staff with special pedagogical, psychosocial, psychological and medical competences, since the student's difficulties in school are to be viewed from an overall perspective. This means that all the professions in the student health can be involved in the work. The purpose of a comprehensive student evaluation is mainly to obtain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the student's needs. The evaluation should in first hand work as a basis for different measures in the learning environment. When needed, a referral should be made to other healthcare services for further evaluation.

## Participation and Influence

The student health shall be characterized by a student perspective and by dialogue and communication within the health work. The cooperation between the home and the school should be marked by participation and influence for children, adolescents and parents.

Another important aspect is the children's and the students' possibilities to have influence over their learning and work environment.

## Confidentiality and Consent

Every profession within the student health has a responsibility to observe existing confidentiality regulations and to have knowledge of the possibilities to exchange necessary information within the frame of the student health work. What can be shared and what is confidential is regulated in the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act.

For the medical work within the student health, previously called the school healthcare, the rules regarding confidentiality are the same as for all other healthcare. From a confidentiality point of view, the medical work at school is considered as separate from the other work. This means that sometimes, consent from the guardians and/or the student is needed to be allowed to exchange information, for example with others working within the student health.

Psychologists and school welfare officers have a high degree of confidentiality (Sw. stark sekretess), i.e. confidentiality is the main rule, and information can only be shared if one can be sure that it can be done without causing any sort of harm for the one the information regards. Principals and teachers have a lower degree of confidentiality (Sw. mindre stark sekretess), i.e. the main rule is that the information is official but should be made confidential if one can assume that sharing the information can cause any sort of harm for the one the information regards. However, psychologists and school welfare officers do not have a confidentiality responsibility towards principals and teachers that are concerned by the case, since they belong to the same organizational category. However, the receiver of information from one profession should be aware that the information received has the same level of confidentiality as it had for the information giver.

All of the staff in school that is not part of the medical work can also follow the general clause (Sw. generalklausulen). The general clause means that if it is obvious that the interest in sharing the information takes precedence over the interest that the information is protecting, the information may be shared. In other words, if it is obvious that it is beneficial for the student, then someone in the staff may share information with another organizational category, i.e. another organizational category within the school, another school or another authority.

## Medical Records and Other Documentation

In the City of Gothenburg's municipal schools, Profdoc medical office (PMO) is used. It is an IT-based system for medical records that supports the handling of medical documentation for the healthcare and student documentation for the other professions of the student health. Every student has a school health medical record. The psychologist writes in a psychologist record. The welfare officer's, the principal's and the special pedagogue's documentation is done in student files.

## Premises and Equipment

Access to adequate equipment and appropriate and accessible premises is highly important for the collective student health.

## Follow-up and Review

The municipality, as well as the city district committees, the education committee and the principals are responsible for the systematic quality work, each one on their respective level. Furthermore, all employees shall actively participate in the quality work. Hence, they have a personal responsibility to take part in the work with following up goals and results.

## Cooperation Between Municipality, County and Government

The student health cooperates with other instances on a national level, as well as with the municipality and the county. Among others, they work together with the social services, the child and adolescent psychiatry (BUP), the child and adolescent rehabilitation, paediatrics, child logopedics, the special pedagogical school authorities (SPSM) and the police. Västbus' guidelines<sup>2</sup> also apply to schools. In Västbus' guidelines it is made clear how the cooperation is to be carried out between managers and staff from the social services, the preschool, the school and the different authorities in the Västra Götaland Region. The target group for the guidelines includes children and adolescents with complex mental/psychiatric and social problems. There is a great diversity when it comes to the gravity of the problems for the people in the target group and therefore, the need of different measures varies. Children and adolescents have a right to the resources necessary to meet their needs.

## Summary

The purpose of these goals and guidelines is to ensure the students' right to equal education in a good environment and the collective student health's task is to contribute to this. The framework for the student health work is established by steering documents on an international, national and municipal level. The city district committees and the education committee are responsible for the tasks of the school head and the caregiver. The principals shall lead and coordinate the work of the student health at the school. The person who works with student health matters is responsible for observing existing regulations for each profession.

The following goals, already described in the text above, shall be part of the material for follow-up and evaluation of the collective student health. Follow-up and review is done regularly on several levels in the organization: on a school, committee and overall municipal level, and is a part of the systematic quality work.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://epi.vgregion.se/Vastbus/>

The collective student health in the City of Gothenburg:

- works with health promotion, prevention and evaluation
- supports the students' development towards the goals of their education, which comprehends both knowledge and values
- contributes to the creation of environments that promote students' learning, development and health
- is characterized by a student perspective
- is characterized by a carefully developed cooperation between the school's different occupational groups.
- gives the students access to all of the different professions within the student health