



Greater Portland Health School-Based Health Centers

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What schools have health centers?

A: In Portland: King Middle School, Deering High School, Portland High School, Casco Bay High School and PATHS

In Westbrook: Westbrook High and Middle Schools

In South Portland: South Portland High and Middle Schools.

Q: How do I enroll my child?

A: Fill out and sign the enrollment form. The completed form can be returned in the following ways: to the school-based health center (SBHC) in the school, to the school nurse or to a homeroom teacher.

Q: Can my child be seen by a health care provider at a Greater Portland Health (GPH) SBHC or primary care practice if the enrollment form was not returned with a parent signature?

A: Minors (under 18 years of age*) must have a signed enrollment form before being seen by a provider. The enrollment form acts as a permission slip to provide medical and behavioral health services to a minor.

Verbal consent from a child's parent or guardian will allow the provider to see the child **one time only**. A completed and signed enrollment form needs to be returned before any other services are provided.

*A minor may give consent to all medical, mental, dental and other health counseling services if the minor is:

- Living separately and independent of parental support
- Married
- A member of the Armed Forces
- Emancipated

If the student is over 18 years of age, they can fill out and sign their enrollment form to receive services at any GPH practice or site.

Q: What qualifies as a confidential visit?

Children enrolled in a SBHC will have access to confidential services (unless the child chooses to include their parent in their care and gives permission to do so). The following services are considered confidential visits:

- Alcohol and drug use and misuse
- Testing and treatment for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases
- Prenatal care services
- Outpatient mental health care
- Contraceptive management (including, but not limited to: condoms, oral contraceptive pills, contraceptive patches, emergency contraceptive pills; for high school students: contraceptive injections, contraceptive implants, and intrauterine contraceptive devices are also options)

Q: Do I need to enroll my child if they are already an established patient at GPH?

A: Yes

Q: Can children be seen at a SBHC if they do not have insurance?

A: Yes

Q: I have a question about insurance or a bill that I have received.

A: If you would like to discuss insurance and payment options, including our sliding fee scale, please call (207) 874-2141 and enter extension 5058 to be connected to our Financial Assistance Counselors. If you have questions about the charges or services on your bill, please call (207) 874-2141 and press 6 to be connected to the Billing Department.

Q: Why do you ask for household income information on the enrollment form? Can I refuse to answer this question?

A: GPH is required to report on the income levels of our patient population for funding that our health centers receive. Individual patient data is not shared, and a child's income level in no way affects the care they receive. You can refuse to provide income information.

Q: What is the difference between the roles of the school nurse and that of the SBHCs?

A: The school nurse assesses medical issues to determine if the child needs to be seen by a primary care provider. School nurses are able to screen for barriers to learning, review vaccination status, triage or treat accidents and illnesses, administer medications and support educational success through IEPs and IHPs.

SBHCs provide an entry point and source of primary care for children and are staffed with medical and behavioral health providers (i.e. doctors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and licensed clinical social workers). Enrolled children can select GPH as their primary medical home, thus giving them coordinated and accessible care year-round. If a child has established primary care elsewhere, providers in the SBHCs will coordinate care with the child's primary care provider.

Q: What services are provided within the SBHCs?

A: The services offered include: sports physicals, diagnosis and treatment of minor illness, management of chronic conditions, immunizations, mental health counseling, phlebotomy (blood draws for labs) and contraceptive management.

Q: Should children be going to the school nurse first or going directly to the SBHC?

A: Children who are enrolled in school-based health services may choose where they want to go first. An enrolled child is always welcome to walk into any SBHC during open hours. Appointments can be made in advance through the school nurse or by the child.

Q: Can my child be seen at the SBHC even if they do not attend that school?

A: Yes, if your child is enrolled in GPH's school-based health services, they can be seen at any of our SBHCs and at any GPH primary care practice that serves children.

Q: Do I need to re-enroll my child in GPH's school-based health services every year? If my child leaves Westbrook, South Portland or Portland Schools, are they still a patient of GPH?

A: As long as your child is an enrolled student in Westbrook, South Portland or Portland Public Schools, you do NOT need to submit new paperwork each year. You also do not need to submit additional paperwork for your child to be seen at any of our GPH SBHCs or any GPH primary care practice that serves children.

If your child is no longer an enrolled student at one of these three school systems, you will need to contact GPH by calling 874-2141 and ask to have your child remain a patient at one of our primary care practices that serves children. Additional paperwork may be needed.

Q: What if my child needs medical care outside of school hours?

A: You can make an appointment at any GPH primary care practice that serves children by calling 874-2141. If your child has a primary care provider outside of GPH, you may choose to contact them as well.

Q: Will my child be able to access the SBHC providers during periods of remote learning or modified school schedules?

A: Yes. All medical and behavioral health providers are able to hold telehealth appointments (via ZOOM or telephone) with patients. In order to have the correct contact information for telehealth visits, please provide your child's email on the enrollment form.

For additional questions, please contact us at (207) 874-2141 X 7 or by email at gphschoolhealth@greaterportlandhealth.org.