



Team Name: Public Health-Healthy Living	Reference Number: CLI.6210.PR.001
Team Lead: Regional Director Public Health-Healthy Living	Program Area: Public Health-Healthy Living
Approved by: Executive Director - North	Policy Section: General
Issue Date: December 4, 2017	Subject: Public Health Nursing (generalist) Coverage
Review Date:	
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PROCEDURE SUBJECT:

Public Health Nursing (generalist) Coverage

PURPOSE:

To ensure public health nursing referrals are received daily Monday to Friday and acted upon according to the program prioritization guidelines.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Coverage is to address urgent and time sensitive referrals or issues according to prioritization guidelines. Examples are: postpartum follow-up, communicable disease follow-up, reproductive health follow-up, emergency measures (flood).
- Coverage is in effect for regularly scheduled days off, vacation, sick leave, compassionate leave, education leave/conferences and vacancies.
- Coverage does not include pre-scheduled work such as immunization clinics, child health clinics, preschool screening, Healthy Baby groups, community meetings, etc.
- Coverage areas for public health nurses align with vacation planning groupings.
- Employee schedules are available on the Employee Contact list.
- Coverage groupings are reviewed annually and may be altered depending on staffing levels (eg. vacancies or unexpected leaves of absence may require coverage for an office that usually supplies its own coverage).

PROCEDURE:

- When all public health nurses are attending a required staff meeting or education event, the central intake clerk contacts a manager for urgent coverage issues that require a same day response (eg. meningitis case).
- Public health nurses attending team or working group meetings schedule coverage only if the meeting and travel time does not allow opportunity to check referrals at the beginning and end of the work day.
- The public health nurse consults with their coverage partner(s) before requesting changes to work schedule.
- Prior to any planned leave or scheduled time away from the office, the public health nurse's voice message is updated to include when they will return to the office and the number for Health Links. If the nurse is in an office with a receptionist, they may also reference the reception phone number for further assistance.
- Email "out of office" is activated for all planned absences from work.
- The public health nurse advises the central intake clerk and local office clerk of any coverage arrangements and changes to work schedule.
- Nurses providing coverage are not expected to check voicemail messages or physically have a presence in the office they are covering unless directed by the manager. This may occur if there is unexpected absence at an office or a vacancy to be managed.
- In the event of extended absence of a nurse or long term coverage due to a vacancy, the manager has a discussion with the covering public health nurse to determine the service provision for the area.