Funding for Public School Nurses

While bridging health and education, school nursing can sometimes feel like it doesn’t fit solidly in either. Funding for school nursing comes from a variety of sources, with 56.0% of public school nurses (RN/LVN/LPN) surveyed reporting that they weren’t sure where the funding for their role came from. Of those that responded, the majority were funded by the education sector. Other funding for school nurses include the health department, local organizations, federal and state organizations.

Medicaid Funding in the Education Sector

42.3%

of respondents reported their buildings billed for Medicaid.

Medicaid offers a potential sustainable revenue stream to pay for school nurses as schools may bill for certain services performed by school nurses for Medicaid-eligible students (requirements and reimbursable services vary by state).

The percentage of schools that bill for Medicaid reimbursements differ by urbanicity and region of the country.

Urban 45.7%
Rural 34.6%

Funding for school nurses is often blended through several sources. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses; therefore, summed percentages are greater than 100%.

Billing for Medicaid by Region

West: 47.3%
Midwest: 45.4%
Northeast: 31.8%
South: 43.2%

These results were obtained during a 2021 study. With a 36.8% survey response rate and variable response rate per survey question, 2,568 respondents reported to be a public school nurse. Of these respondents, 2,392 provided information regarding licensure, with 2,141 reporting as RN and 251 reporting as LPN/LVN.