

Testimony for SB 917 regarding School-Based Health Centers, 3/16/15

From Susan Israel, MD

Members of the Public Health Committee:

Normally, a child's full medical record is not seen by the school system. Parents may give some of the information as needed. However in the proposal for School-Based Health Centers, it seems that the whole student medical record will be available to school officials and State agencies automatically.

It is important to delineate which school and State officials will have access to the medical record, where and how the data will be stored and whether it will be scrubbed from the school data system when the child leaves the school.

Perhaps the school nurse's record and the whole medical record should be separated in the computer data bases, and the School-Based Health program should install the technology to allow the segmentation of certain data from the whole medical record, from being seen by all and from being transmitted.

There will be very intimate, private and sensitive student and *family* information in the records as the staff understands and records student behaviors. For one example, a school nurse's job is to figure out why a child is in her office complaining of a stomach ache for the fourth time in two weeks when no physical cause is apparent and record that information in the record. Thus behavioral data of a social service and psychiatric nature will end up in the school and/or medical record also.

Once information is in an electronic medical record, it will follow a person through life with possible negative consequences for employment, school and military applications. As it stands now since 2002, according to HIPAA, hundreds of authorized people can see a medical record without patient consent or knowledge. These are people involved in treatment (whole staff), payment, operations (including tech support and quality control), research and State and Federal oversight agencies.

Thus the protection of a child's privacy for their future ought to be given detailed consideration as part of SB 917, as HIPAA is not adequate to do so, as it depends on one of hundreds of people (could be a neighbor) not leaking information, or hackers not getting in, or government agencies and other groups not misusing the data.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to express concerns.