

PROJECT BRIEF

TIMES: Telemedicine in Milwaukee Elementary Schools

Background

School-based health clinics, staffed by an interdisciplinary team of nurse practitioners (NP), registered nurses (RN), medical assistants (MA) and a consulting physician, can provide acute and primary care services to elementary school children. Because of cost constraints, however, this team can only be on-site with children on a limited basis. When the NP is not on-site, children with asthma, skin rashes, wounds, and ear/throat infections may be sent home to await treatment – often missing multiple days of school and falling behind in their lessons. This model could be made more effective by utilizing telemedicine technology to allow the RN or MA to access the off-site medical director or NP for teleconferencing, diagnosis, treatment planning and disposition.

Goals

- To develop, implement and evaluate the use of telehealth technology to enhance school-based health services in Milwaukee elementary schools,
- To increase access to primary care and health promotion services for underserved children in Milwaukee elementary schools, and
- To engage Wisconsin Medicaid staff as partners in providing more cost-effective care for school children with acute and primary care needs in the school setting.

Population

Six Milwaukee elementary schools for a total population of approximately 800 students, the majority of which are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches (which can be an indication of high poverty level).

Timeline

May 2007 – June 2008

Study Sponsor

Russell and Betty Shaw Foundation

Investigators, Staff & Partners

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Milwaukee Public Schools
Lincoln Elementary
Allen-Field Elementary
Sherman Elementary
35th Street School
St. Charles Elementary
King Academy