



Health services Assessment Tool for Schools

Purpose

High-quality school health services can improve student health and help to raise academic achievement. As such, developing and sustaining effective school health services is a core component of the mission of schools to equip students to lead healthy and productive adult lives.

The purpose of the Health services Assessment Tool for Schools (HATS) is to enable school districts to:

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of their school health services policies and practices overall and within various categories
- Evaluate the comprehensiveness of their school health services and infrastructure
- Prioritize areas for improvement and determine training, technical assistance, and professional development needs
- Identify and prioritize funding needs
- Track improvements in school health services over time

The HATS sets a "gold standard" for comprehensive school health services that districts can work toward. Completing this assessment is an important first step toward evaluating and improving school health services policies and practices in your district, with the ultimate goal of improving the health and well-being of all students.

It is important to view the HATS as a way to guide improvements in your district's school health services policies and practices. The HATS is not intended as a way to evaluate staff or audit compliance with school health services policies.

Completing the HATS

The person or department that oversees school health services for the district should lead the completion of the HATS with input from health services staff and other district personnel and partners who can assist in providing accurate answers to the questions. In addition, it may be helpful to consult with individuals who are familiar with state and/or national guidelines for school health services in order to assess whether the district's policies and protocols/procedures are aligned with the guidelines. Remember, the results are only helpful if they are accurate. Eliciting honest input is important to making this self-assessment process useful.

The HATS is intended for use at a district level. Questions should be answered from the district-level perspective, not for individual schools.

Most users find it takes 2-4 hours to complete the HATS. You can save your progress and complete the assessment over the course of multiple sessions. The most time-consuming aspect of completing the HATS is often compiling the information needed to answer the questions. Compiling your district's health services policies and protocols before you start will allow you to complete your assessment more quickly. Although it does take time to complete the HATS, users have expressed that the process of completing the assessment is a learning experience for all those involved.

Structure

The HATS is divided into two modules. **Module I: Services** assesses service provision and is broken into 7 sections. **Module II: Infrastructure** has 5 sections. Within each of these categories, the HATS examines service provision/activities, policies, and protocols/procedures.

Module I: Services

1. Chronic and acute conditions (20 questions)
2. Preventive services (14 questions)
3. Emergency care (9 questions)
4. Counseling and health information (2 questions)
5. Referrals, linkages and care coordination (10 questions)
6. Psychosocial identification and reporting (5 questions)
7. Sexual health services (7 questions)

Module II: Infrastructure

1. Internal communication (11 questions)
2. Tracking and reporting (19 questions)
3. Funding (6 questions)
4. Administration and staffing (40 questions)
5. Coordination with school-based health centers (19 questions)

Scoring

The HATS is scored using the following color-coding scheme:

Green = Good job, key elements in place

Yellow = Nice start, but room for improvement

Red = Needs attention, key elements not in place

This tool sets a very high standard for comprehensive school health services. Therefore, *you should expect to receive red and yellow scores for many areas.*

Using the Results

The results of the HATS suggest areas for improvement by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of your school health services and infrastructure. The HATS is not intended as a way to evaluate staff or audit compliance with school health services policies.

Only those registered for the website as part of your team to complete the HATS will be able to view the results of the assessment. Those who work on the tool may decide whether to share these results with others. Project staff will use the results in aggregate to identify trends in school health services, but will not identify individual districts without permission.

The TEAMS School Health Services Improvement Guidebook outlines a systematic process for making improvements to your school health services, based in part on results from the HATS. For detailed information on how you can use your HATS results and apply the TEAMS framework to improve health services in your district, please access the Guidebook from the Resources tab in the HATS sub-menu on the website.