

HIDOE Expands Hawaii Keiki Health Services to Address COVID-19 Pandemic by Adding more than a Dozen Nurses to the Program

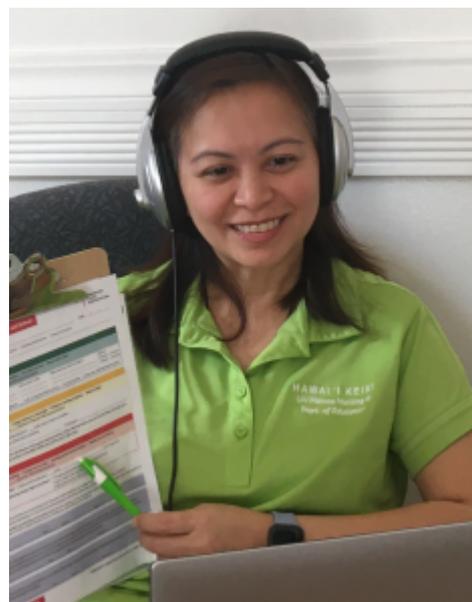
\$175,000 in Contributions from HMSA Creates Greater Access to Telehealth

Honolulu, Hawaii (August 27, 2020) – The Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) is expanding the Hawaii Keiki (HK) program by adding 15 new registered nurses (RNs) and 1 advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) to serve as COVID-19 health resources and school health providers. The new RNs will focus on supporting individual schools statewide. This expands the current team of 23 nurses for a total of 38 nurses available to work with HIDOE in collaboration with the state Department of Health (DOH). HIDOE is using Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to address the impact of COVID-19 on students and learning in the public schools. Recruitment is underway and HK anticipates the nurses will be onboard by mid-September.

HIDOE is committed to maintaining academic progression for all students in the time of COVID-19. As the number of COVID-19 cases in Hawaii rises, the addition of RNs as a trusted health resource will benefit students, faculty, and staff. RNs will provide safety protocol training, advice for COVID-19 exposed and positive families, rapid response to clusters or reported cases, and support for student and teacher coping and resilience behaviors. The additional health resources at the school will allow administrators and teachers to focus on

education, while HK RNs and APRNs will focus on health concerns related to infection, transmission, and state public health regulations. The HK nurses are available to teachers, principals, and parents through a telephone hotline. In addition, the APRNs are providing telehealth services as needed by families.

Health Hotline and APRN Telehealth Visits



In addition, HK is continuing the no-cost health hotline and telehealth APRN visits as an extension of services provided to students in the school health room. Over the past year, a \$25,000 contribution from HMSA gave students continued access to the health hotline and telehealth services over the summer. At the start of this new academic year, HMSA contributed an additional \$150,000 for new technology that will allow the telehealth program to provide virtual medical examinations. The upgrade gives HK providers the ability to reach more students across the state, while focusing on both their physical and mental health care needs.

Students and families can call (844) 436-3888 (toll free) with questions Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. excluding holidays and an RN or APRN will answer health-related questions. If a student needs a visit with a health provider or does not have a care provider, a telehealth appointment with a HK APRN can be scheduled.

Bringing Health Care to Students

School nurses are front line health care providers, serving as the bridge between the health care and education systems. School nurses are essential in infectious disease surveillance, identification and intervention for student physical and mental health concerns, health screenings, school located vaccinations and immunization compliance efforts. HK enhances and builds school based health services that screen for treatable health conditions; provides referrals to primary health care and patient centered medical home services; prevents and controls communicable diseases and other health problems; and provides emergency care for illness or injury. HK nurses will continue to coordinate care with primary care providers and specialists for students with chronic conditions, such as asthma and epilepsy.

Now more than ever, it is vital to the success of HDOE students to ensure a strong partnership between health and education systems.

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About Hawaii Keiki

Hawaii Keiki is a partnership between UH Manoa Nursing and the Hawaii Department of Education and sits at the intersection of education and health to support the DOE to achieve student, school, and system success. The program is designed to improve access and quality of health services in the school by coordinating and expanding existing efforts of the partners and community resources. The program is enhancing and building school based health services that screen for treatable health conditions; provide referral to primary health care and patient centered medical home services; prevent and control communicable disease and other health problems; and provide emergency care for illness or injury. Visit us at www.hawaiikeiki.com.

About UH Manoa Nursing

UH Manoa Nursing, the Nursing Capital of the Pacific, is the leader in nursing education and research in Hawai'i with outreach to Asia and the Pacific Basin. We support the mission of the University of Hawaii at Manoa: to provide an innovative, caring and multicultural environment in which faculty, students and staff work together to generate and transmit knowledge, wisdom, and values to promote quality of life and health for present and future generations. The school offers the BS, master's, and doctoral programs. To reflect Hawaii's unique cultural diversity and heritage, UH Manoa Nursing is committed to increasing the representation of Native Hawaiian and other underserved people in all nursing programs. Visit us at *www.nursing.hawaii.edu*.

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