

Hotline available for HIDOE student-related health questions and telehealth visits

Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) students and families will have access to a new health hotline and telehealth services provided by the Hawaii Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn Program (HK), effective Friday, May 1. These new services will deliver equitable access to health resources and care for HIDOE students using mobile devices and interactive technology.

A partnership between HIDOE and the University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, the HK program offers school-based health services during the academic year and provides nursing coverage to every complex area in the state. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic moving classes to online learning, HK will offer a no-cost health hotline and telehealth visits as an extension of services provided to students in the traditional school health room.



“This partnership helps to ensure continuity of care for

public school students during this unprecedented health crisis,” Deputy Superintendent Phyllis Unebasami said. “Students and families can call the health hotline from anywhere. They will receive health guidance and may be scheduled for a telehealth visit when appropriate. Students will be referred to the appropriate medical and/or mental health care when indicated.”

The health hotline can be reached at **(844) 436-3888 (toll free)** and is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., excluding holidays. HIDOE students and families who call the hotline will speak with an HK registered nurse (RN) or nurse practitioner (APRN). The nurse will perform a basic triage assessment over the phone regarding the caller’s health concern or question about their child. The caller may receive basic health advice or information and, with parental consent, the student may be scheduled for a telehealth visit with an HK nurse practitioner. Nurses staffing the hotline have been working in schools statewide and are familiar with many families and students. Families may request to make an appointment with a specific HK nurse practitioner.

Callers scheduled for a telehealth visit with an HK nurse practitioner will receive a link by email or on their mobile phone prior to the visit. To connect with the nurse, the caller simply clicks the link.

Telehealth is the safe and confidential delivery of health care services using interactive technology. Students’ information will be kept private in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. At a minimum, callers will need access to a telephone.

The health hotline and telehealth visits will be provided at no cost to HIDOE students. Families with medical insurance will be asked to provide their insurance information, but HK will not bill or collect co-pays from families.

In the last decade, telehealth has been integrated into school-based health care. “Nationally, many school-based health centers have transitioned to telehealth in response to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Margo Lulich, HK executive director. “Health hotlines and telehealth are innovative ways to continue to provide safe, quality care to students while they are away from school.”

HK nurses will screen for general health concerns and can connect students with other service providers such as HIDOE support staff such counselors, social workers, school psychologists or other medical referrals.

The health hotline and telehealth visits do not replace a student’s primary care provider but provide families with an alternative way to access health services while supporting social distancing. HK will be sending a note to primary care providers for the telehealth visit. By calling the health hotline, HIDOE students and families can be assured they will speak with a nurse who will answer health questions about their children.

For more information about the Hawaii Keiki health hotline or telehealth services, visit <https://bit.ly/HIDOEtelehealth>.

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About the Hawaii State Department of Education

Hawaii’s public school system was founded on Oct. 15, 1840 by King Kamehameha III. It is the oldest public school system west of the Mississippi. It is one of the largest public school systems in the country – 293 unique schools on seven islands, with more than 22,000 full-time and 20,000 part-time/casual employees serving about 180,000 students, their families, and the community. Our vision: Hawaii’s students are educated, healthy and joyful lifelong learners who contribute positively to our community and global society. Learn more at hawaiipublicschools.org.

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.hawaiiikeiki.com.

About UH Manoa Nursing

UH Manoa Nursing, the Nursing Capital of the Pacific, is the leader in nursing education and research in Hawaii 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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