

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

To control the spread of sexually transmitted disease (venereal disease), the BOH, Department of Human Services, engages in investigation of possible contacts. Although the law does not prohibit sharing information of contact status with parents, it should be noted that treatment is available to minors without parental consent. A student might be encouraged to inform his/ her parents of the problem but school personnel should keep in mind that an immediate public health objective is to protect the health of the student and others, and students might be more communicative if assured of confidentiality.

Care should be taken regarding the inclusion of information about STD in education (health) records; parents have the right of access to all information in "education records" concerning their children. Confidential personal notes on STD could be kept by school nurses or physicians, but these are legally confidential only if the information is not shared with other school personnel. In residential school settings appropriate notations of current STD may be advisable.

If a public health officer requests to talk with a student named as a contact, a private location should be discretely provided when the student and the official can talk. The school nurse could be identified as the proper contact person for public health officials in such situations. The nurse, a guidance counselor, home economics teacher or health education teacher, might be the appropriate person to persuade the student to obtain the necessary tests for diagnosis and treatment.

It is not necessary to exclude a student from school merely because of venereal disease. Only when a person is "dangerous to others" is exclusion required. Detailed information and current literature on sexually transmitted diseases is available from the BOH.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE, TREATMENT; PARENTAL CONSENT:

Title 32, sec. 3292

§3292. Treatment of minors

Any person licensed under this chapter [physician] who renders medical care to a minor for treatment of venereal disease or abuse of drugs is under no obligation to obtain the consent of said minor's parent or guardian or to inform such parent or guardian of such treatment. Nothing in this section shall be construed so as to prohibit the licensed person rendering such treatment from informing such parent or guardian.

Nancy Dube, School Nurse Consultant
Department of Education
624-6688, Nancy.Dube@Maine.Gov