

# News



# Nurse

September 2022



## – WELCOME – BACK TO SCHOOL

We hope everyone had a great summer! Please feel free to reach out to any of the district's nurses with any questions or concerns. We look forward to a great, healthy school year!

### Meet Our Nurses...



**Jennifer Knight**  
Lead Nurse &  
SMK Elementary School  
[jknight@ware.k12.ma.us](mailto:jknight@ware.k12.ma.us)  
413-967-6236, ext. 2151  
  
Nurse Jen has been taking care of our youngest students since 2013!



**Monique Hegarty**  
Ware Middle School  
[mhegarty@ware.k12.ma.us](mailto:mhegarty@ware.k12.ma.us)  
413-967-6903, ext. 3556  
  
Nurse Monique was welcomed to WPS in 2020 to care for the health of our students in grades 4-6.



**Jaime Miner**  
Ware JS High School  
[jminer@ware.k12.ma.us](mailto:jminer@ware.k12.ma.us)  
413-967-6234, ext. 1107  
  
Nurse Jaime joined us in 2017 to provide healthcare to our JS high school students.

### Emergency Medical Forms & Medications in School

Emergency medical forms were sent home with students. If you have not already returned your child/ren's form, please do so as soon as possible. It is important we have this information on file to keep your child/ren healthy! If there are changes during the school year in regard to emergency contact names or numbers, please inform the Main Office of your child/ren's school.

Students who need medication during school hours (including inhalers and epi-pens) will need to have an adult or guardian complete the medication form accompanied by a physician's order to have medication administered during school. All medication received by the nurse's office must be in its original pharmacy labeled container. Please note, narcotics will not be kept in school and any student requiring narcotics should remain home.



As you may be aware, Ware has the first confirmed case of Monkeypox in Western MA. The virus is more like an STD, although it can be transmitted if you share towels, sheets, etc... with someone who has had drainage from a rash. Please visit the link below to learn more about the virus.

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>

SCHOOL  
NURSE  
I'LL BE THERE FOR YOU



Masks are required when visiting the nurse's office.

Below are the updated guidelines for COVID response. It is a big change from what we have been doing the past 2 years. If a student is sent to the nurse's office with potential signs and symptoms of COVID, we can do a rapid test if the parent/guardian has given consent. The consent is included on the health forms for this year. Rapid tests are the only tests that are being done this year. There will be no more pooled testing or home tests sent home.

There is no more contact tracing, unless we have been given alternate guidance by the local health department due to an outbreak. Please contact your child's school nurse if you have any questions or need further clarification.

## OVERVIEW

Effective August 15, 2022, children and staff in child care, K-12, out-of-school time (OST) and recreational camp settings should follow the below guidance.

- A [rapid antigen test](#), such as a self-test, is preferred to a PCR test in most situations.
- To count days for isolation, Day 0 is the first day of symptoms OR the day the day positive test was taken, whichever is earlier.
- Contact tracing is no longer recommended or required in these settings, but schools or programs must continue to work with their Local Board of Health in the case of outbreaks.
- The Commonwealth is not recommending universal mask requirements, surveillance testing of asymptomatic individuals, contact tracing, or test-to-stay testing in schools. While masks are not required or recommended in these settings except for in school health offices, any individual who wishes to continue to mask, including those who face higher risk from COVID-19, should be supported in that choice. For those who need or choose to mask, masking is never required in these settings while the individual is eating, drinking, sleeping or outside.
- All individuals are encouraged to stay up-to-date with vaccination as vaccines remain the best way to help protect yourself and others.

## ISOLATION AND EXPOSURE GUIDANCE AND PROTOCOLS

### Guidance for Children and Staff in Child Care, K-12, OST, and Recreational Camp Settings:

- Quarantine is no longer required nor recommended for children or staff in these settings, regardless of vaccination status or where the exposure occurred. All exposed individuals may continue to attend programming as long as they remain asymptomatic. Those who can mask should do so until Day 10, and it is recommended that they test on Day 6 of exposure. If symptoms develop, follow the guidance for symptomatic individuals, below.
- Children and staff who test positive must isolate for at least 5 days. If they are asymptomatic or symptoms are resolving and they have been fever free without the use of fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours, they may return to programming after Day 5 and should wear a high-quality mask through Day 10:
  - If the individual is able to mask, they must do so through Day 10.
    - If the child has a negative test on Day 5 or later, they do not need to mask.
    - If the individual is unable to mask, they may return to programming with a negative test on Day 5 or later.
- Symptomatic individuals can remain in their school or program if they have mild symptoms, are tested immediately onsite, and that test is negative. Best practice would also include wearing a mask, if possible, until symptoms are fully resolved. For symptomatic individuals, DPH recommends a second test within 48 hours if the initial test is negative.

If the symptomatic individual cannot be tested immediately, they should be sent home and allowed to return to their program or school if symptoms remain mild and they test negative, or they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their symptoms are resolving, or if a medical professional makes an alternative diagnosis. A negative test is strongly recommended for return.