

Supporting the Whole Child: Connecting Brain Health, Systems, and Practice

Navigating Pediatric Medical Complexity in School-Based Settings

June 25th, 2026
Session #6



What This Series Is

- An ongoing, twice-monthly learning series
- Grounded in the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) framework
- Interactive and case-based (not just presentations)
- Designed for multiple disciplines and perspectives
- Focused on real-world practice and collaboration

A space to learn, share, and problem-solve together in support of the whole child



Timothy Ryan Smith, M.D., FAAP
University of Kansas Medical Center

Associate Professor of Pediatrics,
Founder & Director, Pillars Medical
Complexity Clinic



Deb Cook, RN, AE-C
Certified Asthma Educator & Retired
School Nurse



Today's Session

- Explore the care, coordination, and resources that support children with medical complexity (CMC)
- Examine the school nurse's role in collaborating with families, providers, and school staff to promote student success

WSSC Component(s) addressed: Health Services



Learning Objectives

1. Identify the multidisciplinary team involved in the care of children with medical complexity (CMC)
2. Become familiar with the clinical and administrative resources available to children with medical complexity (CMC)
3. Describe the school nurse's role as the coordinator of the interdisciplinary team in developing, implementing, and evaluating an individualized plan of care for a medically complex student
4. Identify strategies the school nurse can use to collaborate with families, healthcare providers, school personnel, and community partners to ensure safe, effective, and inclusive care for medically complex children in the educational environment

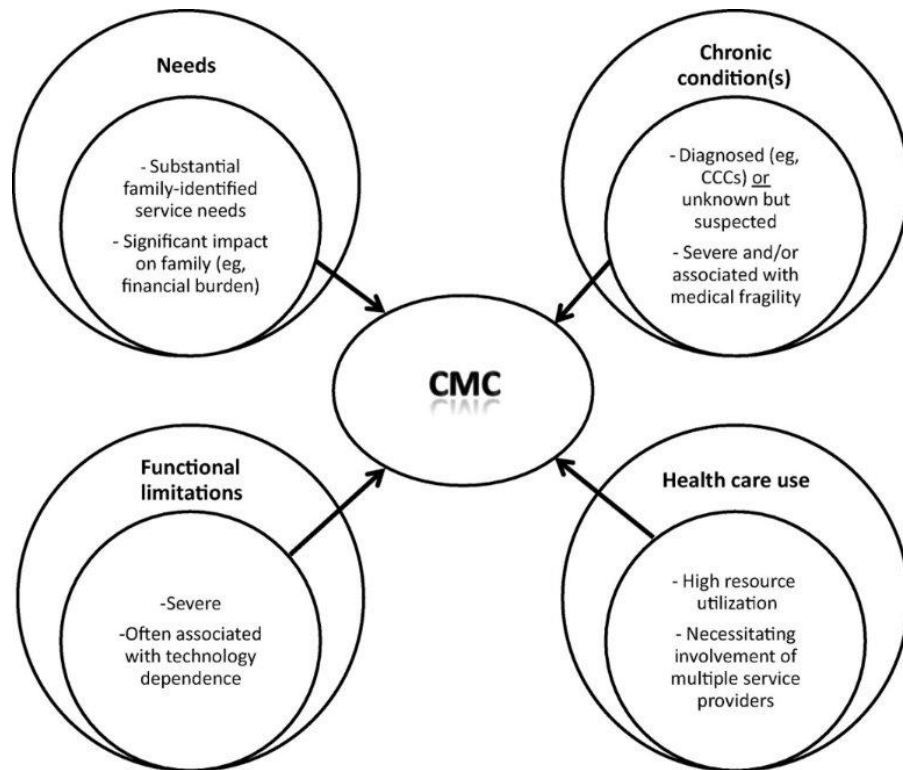


Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN)

- Comprise ~20% of US children
- Have or are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.



Who are CMC?



Look at what I can do with a little help... Assistive technology may

- Facilitate core functions
 - Breathing
 - Circulation
 - Stooling
- Mobility/ Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)
 - Wheelchair
 - Walker
 - Orthotics
 - Pencil Grips
 - Elongated Straws
- Assist medical care
 - Medication administration
 - Via feeding tube
 - Via central venous catheter
- Pain control
- Seizure treatment
- Secretion management



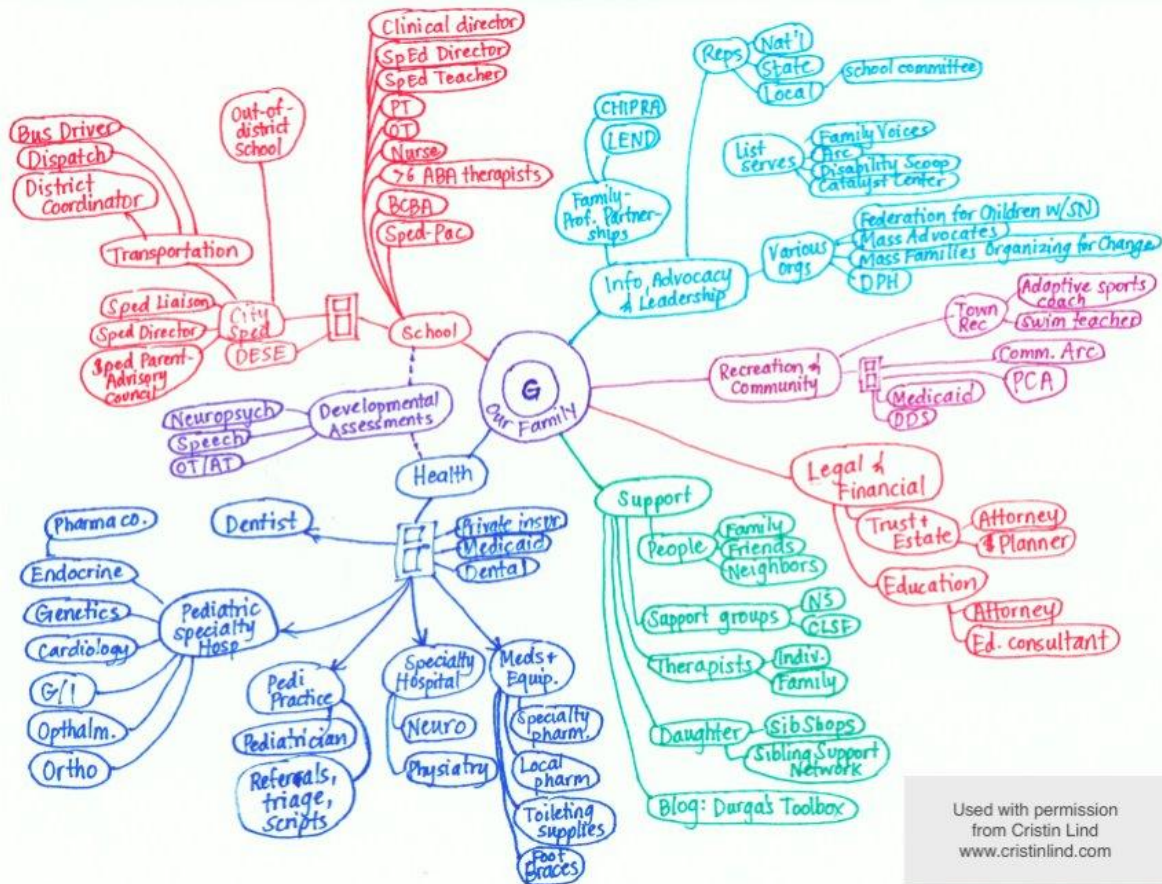
More ways than one... Medication administration

- Oral
- Sublingual
- Gastrostomy
- Dermal patch
- Rectal
- Injector
- Subcutaneous
- Intravenous
- Nebulized



Telehealth ROCKS

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from Cristin Lind
www.cristinlind.com



Working together under one or many roofs

- Child
- Parents/Family
- Private Duty Nursing
- School administration
- School health personnel
- Teachers
- Health Care Team



Emergency Information Form



WHAT IS MOST
LIKELY REASON FOR
AN EMERGENCY?



CONTACT
INFORMATION



"GO BAG"



Action Plans

- Asthma Action Plan
 - Seizure Action Plan
 - Diabetes: Hyperglycemia & Hypoglycemia Action Plan
 - Pulmonary Action Plan
-
- Trach dislodgement
 - Feeding tube dislodgement
 - Feeding Intolerance
 - Constipation
 - Dysautonomia
 - Fever
 - Others?



Katie Beckett



Home Care for Children

Nursing

Physical,
Occupational, &
Speech Language
therapists

Respiratory
Therapists

Medical Social
workers

Psychologists

Dieticians

Home health or
personal care aids

Private duty
nursing



Home Care & Financial Supports Overview

- Medicaid
 - Waivers
 - Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis Treatment (EPSDT)
 - Early intervention services
- Financial Supports
 - Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs Programs
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - ABLE accounts & Special Needs Trust
- Home Health Services
 - Private Duty Nursing
 - Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Programs



*Family should
contact service
support coordinator
or insurance case
manager to discuss
options*



Caring for Children in School with Complex Medical Conditions - The School Nurse Role



Introduction

- Importance of supporting students with complex health conditions in the school setting
- Impact on attendance, academic performance, participation, and overall well-being
- Role of the school nurse as care coordinator and team leader



Understanding Complex Medical Conditions in School

- Identifying students with complex medical conditions
- Common complex/chronic conditions:
 - i. Asthma
 - ii. Diabetes
 - iii. Seizure disorders
 - iv. Food allergies/anaphylaxis
 - v. Cardiac conditions
 - vi. Sickle cell disease
 - vii. Cystic fibrosis
 - viii. Mental and behavioral health conditions



Building the School Health Team

- Student & family
- School nurse
- School administrators
- Teachers and support staff
- Healthcare providers
- Community partners and specialists

Importance of communication and collaboration



Assessment and Information Gathering

- What are the needs? Challenges?
- Parental consents and releases
- Health status, potential barriers to learning
- Emergency concerns?



Planning Care

- Coordinate meetings – parent, teacher, administration
- Will there be an IEP or a 504 Accommodation Plan?
- Emergency Action Plans
- Daily management
- Medications
- Supplies



Coordination and Training

- Care, Coordination and Communication
 - Communication between all stakeholders
 - Maintaining confidentiality while providing safety
 - Transition planning (between grades)
- Staff Education and Training
 - Be sure to consider when the school nurse is absent
 - Sharing relevant information



Participation in School Activities

- Classroom
- Field Trips
- Physical Education (P.E.)
- Transportation
- Insuring inclusion and safety



Monitoring and Evaluating the Plan

- Ongoing assessment
- Tracking attendance
- Reviewing incidents, emergency response
- Updating plans and conditions as treatments change

School Nurse Leadership Role

- Leading interdisciplinary care planning
- Coordinating communication between healthcare and educational teams
- Advocating for student health and educational access
- Using evidence-based practices to improve student outcomes



Overview –

Care for students with chronic medical conditions through coordinated health and educational support.

Ensure the student's health, safety, and medical needs are met throughout the school day.

Advocate for the student's academic success and overall well-being.

Collaborate with families, healthcare providers, educators, and other school personnel.

Develop and implement individualized plans to support the student's health and educational needs.

Promote services in the least restrictive environment whenever possible.

Provide appropriate accommodations and supports to encourage regular attendance.

Facilitate the student's full participation in school activities.

Ensure equal access to educational opportunities.



Case Discussion

- 8yo male with Prader- Willi and cognitive impairment with IEP and instruction in special education classroom having frequent seizure events at school but not home
- Multiple seizure studies and medication trials showed that seizures were not responsive to medications
- Child missed approximately 40 days due to events with each event disrupting learning for 10-40 minutes



Case Discussion

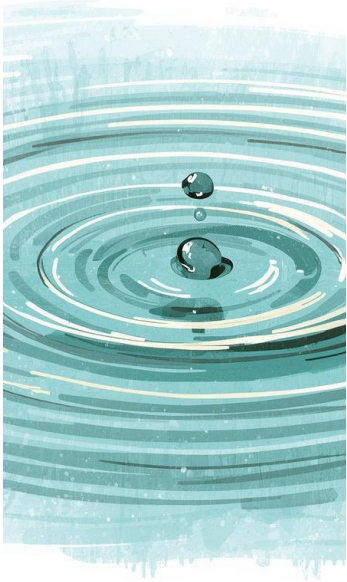
What might be your role in crafting a plan to ensure student safety?

How might you help manage the disruption/stress of a medical event in your own organization?

How can you in your role help to ensure this student stays in school despite the medical events?



Today's Ripple



- 1) Children with medical complexity dictate the communication and collaboration of large team with child and caregivers at the center.
- 2) Standard documentation and planning can prepare stakeholders for medical events in the community, health care, or school setting.
- 3) The school nurse serves as the clinical leader and care coordinator for students with complex medical conditions, ensuring the needs are met and plans are implemented safely and consistently while collaborating with families, healthcare providers, and school staff
- 4) Successful school participation for children with complex medical conditions depends on effective teamwork, communication, and preparation, with the school nurse playing a central role in promoting student health, safety, inclusion, and academic success



We want your feedback!



What's Next

Supporting the Whole Child by Supporting the Whole Team

Join us July 8th, 2026 at 9 AM CST with Melissa Maras &
Shelby Nace!



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