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Understanding the duties of a school nurse can provide useful insight into pediatric care. School nurses must be able to assess and provide care for children of varying ages quickly. For each encounter, the school nurse must consider the child's age and developmental level, then use this information to communicate with them effectively.

I effectively used therapeutic communication for each child that came into the nurse's office. My goal for each encounter was to provide a comforting and calming presence for every child. I also witnessed how the school nurse used the nursing process to ensure proper nursing care. I witnessed the nurse assess many children for headlice, which was followed up with a phone call to the parents. I provided education to a child with newly diagnosed type I diabetes on proper snacks that will not dramatically alter her blood glucose.

The school nurse plays a significant impact on pediatric health. Firstly, the school nurse distributes prescribed medications for every child at the proper times. Providing medicines for children during school hours is crucial in maintaining adequate medication compliance when parents are unable. Secondly, the school nurse can assess children who come in with complaints and quickly address their concerns. Many children came in with flu-like symptoms, and the school nurse is often the first health professional to identify these symptoms. Lastly, the school nurse provides primary health screening, such as hearing and vision tests. School nurses identify many of the hearing and vision deficits found in children.

The primary health concern for this population that I observed is personal hygiene, as evidenced by head lice. Many children came to the school nurse with lice, and most of them had unhygienic living conditions. Many of the children who came with headlice had a history of past encounters with child protective services due to coming to school wearing dirty clothes. I would assume the leading cause for this issue is parents who are in unfortunate financial situations. A second health concern related to poor economic conditions is the lack of proper primary healthcare. Many of the caregivers for the children could not afford adequate healthcare, which means they do not receive yearly physicals.

The way I would address the spread of lice would be to start a fundraiser to provide proper lice treatment to give to the parents of children with lice. Many of the children who have lice are from families who have financial strain. It would be a financial relief to provide lice shampoo the families to use on their children, while also reducing the spread of lice throughout the school.