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On Behalf Of: School Nurses
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****Advocating for Nurse-Led Supervision in the School Setting****

As a Registered Nurse and a Nursing Supervisor, I want to highlight the critical importance of having only nurses supervise and evaluate other nurses. This approach ensures adherence to professional standards, safeguards the quality of care, and supports the professional growth of school nurses.

The Case for Nurse-Led Supervision

1. Expertise in Professional Standards

Nurses operate within the framework of the Nurse Practice Act and the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) rules. These regulations are complex and require in-depth understanding to ensure compliance and high-quality nursing practice. A supervisor without a nursing background lacks the foundational knowledge to evaluate a nurse's performance accurately, which could lead to misunderstandings and potentially jeopardize patient care.

2. The Importance of Subject Matter Expertise

Supervising and evaluating a highly skilled professional requires expertise in that field. Asking a non-nurse to supervise and evaluate a nurse is akin to asking a secretary to evaluate a teacher using the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) rules. Both scenarios fail to recognize the specialized knowledge required to assess performance effectively. Professionals in any field deserve to be evaluated by someone who understands the nuances of their work.

3. Ensuring Patient Safety and Care Quality

In the school setting, nurses are responsible for critical health decisions that affect student well-being. Supervision by someone who does not fully understand nursing protocols, clinical judgment, and decision-making processes could compromise the safety and quality of care provided. Nurse supervisors are uniquely equipped to identify areas for improvement and support their peers in maintaining and enhancing care standards.

4. Fostering Professional Growth

Nurses benefit from constructive feedback and mentorship provided by supervisors who share their professional background. Nurse-led supervision fosters an environment of mutual respect and understanding, allowing for tailored guidance and

professional development that aligns with the unique challenges and responsibilities of school nursing.

Recommendations for Implementation

1. **Policy Adoption**: Advocate for school districts to adopt policies requiring that only licensed nurses supervise and evaluate other nurses.
2. **Training and Development**: Provide leadership training for nurse supervisors to enhance their ability to mentor and evaluate effectively.
3. **Collaboration with Professional Organizations**: Partner with organizations such as the OSBN and the American Nurses Association (ANA) to emphasize the importance of nurse-led supervision and provide supporting resources.
4. **Education for Stakeholders**: Educate school administrators and decision-makers on the specialized role of nurses and the necessity of nurse-led supervision for maintaining high standards of care.

Conclusion

Supervision and evaluation are integral to maintaining excellence in nursing practice. By ensuring that only nurses supervise and evaluate other nurses, we can uphold the integrity of the profession, ensure compliance with regulatory standards, and, most importantly, provide safe and effective care for students. This model of supervision respects the complexity and importance of nursing while fostering a supportive and professional work environment.

By advocating for this essential change, we can enhance the quality of school health services and support the vital role of nurses in the educational setting.