**Sexual Health Services in High Schools Q+A**

**Why provide sexual health services in the high schools?**

**Many teens have questions and concerns regarding a number of issues related to Sexual Health. Having an experienced and knowledgeable Nurse Practitioner (NP) allows teens to access a full scope of services available in their school which can include:**

* **Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing, treatment, and prevention counselling**

**If treatment for an infection is necessary, the NP can treat the teen in the office or call a prescription to a local pharmacy. In addition to testing and treatment, education on STI prevention is given as well.**

* **Birth Control**

**Pregnancy prevention education is key to ensuring teens are aware of the options they have available to them. Condoms are available free of charge. Birth control can also be prescribed. As with any prescription, safety for the teen is determined after an examination and medical/family history is obtained.**

* **Pregnancy Testing and Options for Care**

**Teen girls concerned about a possible pregnancy can have a pregnancy testing completed by the NP onsite. Education is key in this situation, screening for STIs and pregnancy prevention counselling is given. Positive test results are managed on a case by case scenario, the teen is given information on all options available to them in a non-judgmental environment.**

* **Sexuality/Gender Identity**

**The NP can be a source of information for those teens that have questions/concerns regarding their sexuality and gender identity. Teens can know the NP is a professional that can provide confidential and non-judgmental services in a safe space.**

**Can services be provided to my child if he or she is under the age of 16?**

**All teens are encouraged to discuss sexual health concerns with their parent(s) or guardians by the NP. In some situations this may not be an option for the teen. The Government of New Brunswick under the Medical Consent of Minors Act (1976) allows for a medical practitioner such as a NP to provide health care services to teens under the age of 16 without the need for parental consent. The NP would need to first ensure their opinion is that the minor is capable of understanding the nature and consequences of the treatment and also determine that the medical treatment or procedure to be used is in the best interests of the minor.**