

Increasing Childhood Blood Lead Testing

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Lead Poisoning 101

Approximately 60 percent of Medicaid eligible children live in areas that are considered high risk for lead poisoning. Lead poisoning occurs when lead is absorbed by the body through breathing or swallowing a contaminated substance. The most common source of lead exposure for children is

deteriorated lead-based paint found in homes built prior to 1978. Some other common sources of lead include:

- Lead-based paint chips or dust
- Contaminated water and soil
- Food and juice stored in cans not made in the U.S.
- Imported jewelry, pottery and cosmetics

Top Testing Rates

21 counties tested 60% or more of Medicaid eligible one year olds in 2005.

Adams:	69%
Ashland:	60%
Brown:	63%
Clark:	80%
Cuyahoga:	72%
Franklin:	71%
Guernsey:	82%
Highland:	60%
Licking:	72%
Medina:	62%
Miami:	61%
Muskingum:	80%
Noble:	70%
Richland:	62%
Ross:	69%
Seneca:	65%
Shelby:	61%
Stark:	62%
Summit:	63%
Vinton:	60%
Williams:	70%

Small amounts of lead can harm a child’s brain, kidneys and stomach. Lead poisoning can slow development and may cause learning and behavior problems.

Performance Monitoring

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has incorporated blood lead testing as a performance measure that is regularly tracked within the ODJFS Performance Center.

The current performance goal for ODJFS is to reach a blood lead testing rate of **60 percent** for all Medicaid enrolled one and two year-old children.

To meet this goal, ODJFS partners with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and other stakeholders to contribute to the ODH Lead Elimination Plan and has developed deliverables associated with blood lead testing and lead poisoning prevention initiatives. Within five years, this collaboration has worked to nearly double the lead testing rates among Medicaid enrolled children.

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Medicaid Mandatory Screening Requirements

All one and two year-old Medicaid-eligible children must have a blood lead screening test, regardless of zip code or exposure, as stated in the Ohio Administrative Code: 5101:3-14-03.

Every Medicaid eligible child between the ages of 36 and 72 months of age must have a blood lead screening test unless there is documentation of a previous test.

Providers: Testing Protocol & Compliance

Use a medical record reminder.

Flag medical records of all Medicaid-eligible children in your practice (e.g., use a red sticker) as a reminder of the requirement of a blood lead test at 12 **and** 24 months.

Providers are considered to be in compliance with the requirement for a 12 month old child's lead test if a blood lead test is completed between nine and 21 months.

Providers are considered to be in compliance with the requirement for 24 months if the child receives a blood lead test between 22 months and 36 months.

If a blood lead test has been performed earlier than nine months, the child must receive another screening sometime during the nine to 21 month period.

There should be a **12 month interval** between the first blood lead test and the second.

The child should be **at least 22 months of age** before ordering a blood test for their 24 month test.

General provider compliance is based on the above stated criteria. Compliance standards for Managed Care providers can be found here:

Performance Measures for OHP Managed Care Plan:

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/bmhc/documents/reports/cy2004.pdf>

For More Information, visit:

Medicaid Information for Providers:

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/bhpp/lpplpt/providerlead.stm>

FAST FACTS

OHP and ODH

Lead Testing Initiatives

- Measure primary care provider lead testing performance.
- Increase education about lead testing and lead poisoning prevention to Medicaid providers.
- Increase collaboration with providers and advocacy groups.
- Continue assessment of current knowledge level of lead poisoning and barriers to lead testing for both Medicaid providers and parents.
- Continue informational articles in various medical provider publications.
- Develop a permanent data interface between ODH and OHP.
- Increase outreach and education to parents about the importance of blood lead testing.
- Distribute Birthday Card reminders to consumers to remind them to have children tested for lead exposure.
- Addition of a place on the latest ODH Immunization Card for parents to document blood lead test information.