

GUIDELINES for IMPROVING BLOOD LEAD TESTING RATES

REMEMBER 2 TESTS ARE REQUIRED PRIOR TO A CHILD'S 37 MONTH OLD BIRTHDAY.

You can improve your rate of blood lead screening for your Medicaid patients by following these guidelines which focus on identifying children for screening, creating opportunities for screening, obtaining specimens, and following-up on results. Note that if you provide services for a Medicaid managed care plan, you may have additional guidelines related to lead screening.

IDENTIFYING PATIENTS for BLOOD LEAD SCREENING

- A. **Mandatory screening-** All 12- and 24-months-old Medicaid eligible children **must** have a blood lead screening test (regardless of ZIP Code or exposure to lead), as stated in the EPSDT rule 5101:3-14-03.
- B. A Risk Assessment Questionnaire **is not** an acceptable substitute for the blood lead screening test.
- C. **Every Medicaid eligible child between the ages of 36- and 72-months of age** must have a blood lead screening test unless you have documentation that the child has been previously screened for lead poisoning.
- D. **Use a Medical Record reminder-** Flag the medical records of all Medicaid eligible children in your practice--**for example, using a red sticker--** as a reminder of the requirement of a blood lead screening test at 12- and 24-months of age.
- E. A **provider will be considered to be in compliance** with the blood lead testing requirement at 12 months of age if the child receives a blood lead screening test between 9 months and 21, inclusive. If a blood lead test has been performed earlier than 9 months, the child must receive another blood lead screening test sometime during the 9 to 21 month period.
- F. A **provider will be considered in compliance** with the blood lead testing requirement at 24 months of age, if the child receives a blood lead screening test between 22 months and 36 months, inclusive.
- G. There **should be a 12 month interval between the first blood lead screening test** (that is, the screening during the 9 to 21 month period) **and the second blood lead screening test** (that is, the screening during the 22 to 36 month period). Please make sure child is at least 22 months of age before ordering a blood test for their 24 month test.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES for BLOOD LEAD SCREENING

- A. **Schedule a HealthChek (EPSDT) or comprehensive well child exam** (to include a blood lead test) during a current exam; blood lead tests **can be drawn or ordered during a well or sick care visit for 12- and 24-month-old children.**

- B. The patient's health plan should send reminders when a child is approaching their 1st and 2nd birthdays, stressing the need for a HealthChek or comprehensive well child exam, including a history and physical and assessment, immunization update, and a blood lead screening test.

OBTAINING BLOOD LEAD SPECIMENS

- A. Ohio law requires that **laboratories report all blood lead test results** to the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). Verify that the lab you refer to is CLIA certified and approved by the ODH, and that the lab reports all blood lead test results to the ODH. Contact the Surveillance Coordinator at the ODH Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, 614-728-6816, for information on CLIA certified labs.
- B. If possible, draw the blood specimen in your office. If the specimen must be drawn at a lab, **stress the importance** of the test to the child's parent/guardian, **and encourage** that the test be done right after the visit. If the lab requires an appointment, **schedule the appointment before the child leaves your office.**
- C. Ohio law requires that physicians **provide the following information** when ordering blood lead tests, as stated in the Ohio Administrative Code section 3201-32-05, including: patient information (name, Medicaid number, address, birth date, sex, race/national origin, telephone); procedure information (the procedure used to obtain the specimen and when it was drawn); physician's name, address, telephone number.

FOLLOWING-UP on TEST RESULTS

- A. Be sure to check for the return of the lab slip and record the test result in the patient's record. For example, if you do not receive test results within 30 days, someone in your office should contact the patient and the lab to verify if the blood was drawn and if the analysis was completed.
- B. **Follow-up** with appropriate medical management. Environmental investigations are initiated by the state and local health departments for all confirmed blood tests of 10 micrograms/dL and above. Medical intervention guidelines are available from the OHP website at; <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/bhpp/lpplpt/mmchart1.pdf> or from the ODH Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, at 614-728-9454.

Need more information? Contact Donna Bush at the Office of Ohio Health Plans, 614-466-6420.