



Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) COVID-19 Fact Sheet – Birthing Facilities

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENINGS ARE STILL REQUIRED

The Governor's recent executive "stay at home" order (https://www.in.gov/gov/files/Executive_Order_20-08_Stay_at_Home.pdf) does not change or eliminate any state mandate or regulation regarding newborn hearing screening services including the requirement that every baby should receive a newborn hearing screening (Indiana Code 16-41-17-2) The Executive Order also provides an exemption for healthcare providers who are providing services related to any state mandate or regulation.

Newborn hearing screenings should continue to be completed on all babies born in Indiana as outlined in the EHDI Hospital Manual (www.hearing.in.gov) as well as in the Indiana Code. Birthing hospitals are required to report hearing screening results to EHDI and the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) through Early Hearing Response System (EARS). **Newborn hearing screenings and reporting of those results to EHDI and ISDH should continue as usual with only two inpatient hearing screenings being completed and referral to diagnostic audiology facility if the baby does not pass either or both ears on both screenings.**

CONCERNS FOR NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING FOLLOW UP

Due to COVID-19 many audiology diagnostic facilities are closed for a certain time frame as dictated by their individual management, creating challenges in newborn hearing screening efforts. These changes will likely impact a birthing facility's ability to contact an audiology facility to schedule a baby for diagnostic follow up testing before the family leaves the hospital.

BIRTHING HOSPITALS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING

- 1. Babies who do not pass newborn hearing screening are required to be reported into EARS within five days of the screening.**
- 2. Provide an additional contact person and phone number for the family in the comment section of EARS.** This can include grandparents or other family members. This will improve our ability to contact families to support their ability to schedule diagnostic audiology follow up testing.
- 3. Each family should identify a specific audiology provider (from the attached list) to contact to schedule and the hospital should document in the comment section in Ears which facility the family will contact.** Families should be given the name, address and phone number of the audiology provider *as well as contact information for our offices* so we can assist them in the process.
- 4. Fax demographic and screening results to the audiology facility the family chose (fax numbers on the attached list of providers) as well as the baby's pediatrician or primary care physician.** This ensures that



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several providers have communicated consistent information to the family to minimize confusion in scheduling follow up appointments.

5. **Please ensure hospital personnel completing the newborn hearing screenings are communicating to parents the importance of scheduling follow up diagnostic testing.** It is the responsibility of the birthing facilities to communicate the importance of diagnostic testing and follow up.

WHAT IS COVID-19?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness, including fever, cough and shortness of breath. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel (new) coronavirus. It is not the same as other types of coronaviruses that commonly circulate among people and cause mild illness, like the common cold. Those who are older than 60, have underlying health conditions such as heart or lung disease, and diabetes, are particularly at risk.

HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Please contact our staff with any questions.

Suzanne M. Foley, AuD., Director

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (EHDI)

www.hearing.in.gov

317-232-0972