



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health

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Governor

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Division Director

September 23, 2014

Dear North Carolina Medical Facilities and Health Care Providers Serving Neonates and Infants,

The North Carolina General Assembly passed Session Law 2013-45 to expand the Newborn Screening program to include newborn screening for critical congenital heart defects (CCHD) utilizing pulse oximetry. As a result of this legislation, temporary public health rules requiring CCHD screening of every neonate and required reporting of data related to CCHD screening went into effect on July 25, 2014. The rules were developed using an expert panel and multiple other stakeholders from North Carolina and can be found at: <http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac/title%2010a%20-%20health%20and%20human%20services/chapter%2043%20-%20personal%20health/subchapter%20k/subchapter%20k%20rules.html>

Screening for CCHD utilizing pulse oximetry is now required for every neonate delivered in hospitals, birthing centers, homes or other locations in North Carolina by 24 to 48 hours of age. Parents or guardians may object to the CCHD screening of a neonate or infant in NC at any time before the screening is performed in accordance with G.S. 130A-125. Screening for CCHD is not required if a diagnostic neonatal echocardiogram is performed on the neonate or infant after birth and prior to discharge from care. A protocol for screening for CCHD and evaluation of positive screenings is required for neonates and infants in neonatal intensive care units in NC.

The NC rules state that CCHD screening must follow a protocol based on American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and American Heart Association (AHA) national recommendations. In addition, all hospitals, birthing centers and attending health care providers caring for the infant are required to have and implement a plan for timely evaluation and follow up of neonates with positive CCHD screenings before discharge from care and in accordance with the most current published recommendations from the AAP/AHA. This requirement applies to health care providers of neonates who are involved with births which occur in birthing facilities, homes or other locations in NC. The national recommendations can be found at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/128/5/e1259.full.pdf+html?sid=85e81711-f9b8-43d1-a352-479168895a72>

In addition, reporting requirements with respect to CCHD screening are now in effect in order to allow for mandated data collection for public health surveillance of CCHD through the NC Birth Defects Monitoring Program (NC BDMP). Specific information about the types of required data to be reported

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can be found under the Reporting Requirements section of the rules at:

<http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac/title%2010a%20-%20health%20and%20human%20services/chapter%2043%20-%20personal%20health/subchapter%20k/subchapter%20k%20rules.html>

All medical facilities and health care providers screening for CCHD should report positive (failed) final screening results within 7 days of the screening either to <http://cchd.pqcnc.org> OR via fax to the NC BDMP at 919-733-8485. If you have questions about reporting positive (failed) final screening results to the NC BDMP, please contact Dr. Robert Meyer at 919-733-4728. All required aggregate quarterly CCHD screening data from medical facilities and health care providers should be reported to <http://cchd.pqcnc.org> by two weeks following the quarter ending December 31, 2014 and then 15 days following the end of each quarter on an ongoing basis.

The Perinatal Quality Collaborative of North Carolina (PQCNC) will have numerous resources related to screening, evaluation, and other CCHD screening related materials soon at: <http://cchd.pqcnc.org> PQCNC will also soon offer hospitals, birthing centers, midwives and other community health care providers the opportunity to participate in a free quality improvement learning collaborative about CCHD screening processes. For a brief collection of existing CCHD Resources for parents and providers at this time, please go to: <http://ncdhhs.gov/dph/wch/doc/families/CCHD-ScreeningResources-v2-FINAL.pdf>

Thank you for your service as a medical facility or health care provider serving infants and their families in North Carolina. We appreciate your commitment to ensuring the best outcomes for infants born in our state.

Sincerely,

Penelope Slade-Sawyer  
Division Director  
Division of Public Health