



Technical Assistance Bulletin

TO: WV Birth to Three Interim Service Coordinators, Service Coordinators and Practitioners

FROM: WV Birth to Three

DATE: March 2021

ISSUE: Referring Children for Audiological Evaluations

The purpose of this Technical Assistance Bulletin is to provide requirements for referring children for an audiological evaluation. WV Birth to Three professionals want to identify children with hearing loss as early as possible. Even though referrals are made to WV Birth to Three when a child fails his/her initial screening at birth and is evaluated with a hearing loss, most hearing loss occurs later for children. There continues to be a lower number of children identified with hearing loss while receiving WV Birth to Three services.

The WV Birth to Three Hearing Implementation Team has developed hearing resource materials to identify many of the risk factors that could be present and result in later hearing loss, such as: 'Risk Factors for Delayed Onset of Hearing Loss', 'Early Warning Signs of Hearing Loss' and 'A Tool for Identifying Vision and Hearing Loss in Children with Multiple Disabilities'.

To assure that these children are identified as early as possible, WV Birth to Three is implementing this new policy:

- 1) For any child referred to WV Birth to Three for concerns related to communication development, the Interim Service Coordinator will review hearing resource materials with the family and, with the family's permission, schedule an audiological evaluation for the child unless the child has had a completed audiological evaluation within the previous three months.
- 2) All children with concerns about communication development will be referred for an audiological evaluation prior to each Annual IFSP meeting unless they have had a negative audiological evaluation within three months of the Annual IFSP meeting date. The Service Coordinator will review hearing resource materials with the family, and with the family's permission, schedule an audiological evaluation for the child. The visit should be scheduled well in advance of the Annual IFSP meeting so results will be available for the team.
- 3) If at any other point, concerns about hearing are expressed by parents or team members, the Service Coordinator will work with the parent to schedule an audiological evaluation.
- 4) The Service Coordinator will submit a Service Authorization Request Form to the WV Birth to Three State office for these visits. WV Birth to Three will cover the cost of initial audiological evaluation. However, further medical procedures such as removal of ear wax, insertion of tubes, and office visits for those procedures will not be covered by WV Birth to Three. Please be sure the families are aware that these additional medical actions may be billed to their insurance.
- 5) Each family of any child identified with a hearing loss will be offered the opportunity to add a Hearing Specialist to their child's team.