

Ongoing Research Projects With CDC-EHDI Funding

Birth Certificate Orders: A Missed Opportunity for Hearing Screening Follow-Up - Utah State University

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Background: Newborn hearing screening programs exist in all states and have aided dramatically in the early identification of children with hearing loss. However, the extent to which follow-up diagnostic testing takes place for infants who fail or miss the initial screen is less than optimal, thus representing a serious health-related concern. If children with hearing loss are not identified early it is difficult for them to develop the language, social, and cognitive skills necessary for success later in life. Early identification of children with hearing loss is crucial in ensuring that they receive needed intervention services.

Purpose: The focus of this project is on increasing the percentage of children who complete needed follow-up diagnostic evaluation.

Methods: This project will be accomplished by linking existing state databases, including Vital Records (birth and death certificates), with the Newborn Hearing Screening database to identify children who have not completed hearing screening or who need additional follow-up. Through this linkage, when parents apply for a birth certificate for their child, the Vital Records staff will receive an "alert" message informing them that the child did not pass the initial screening and requires follow-up diagnostic evaluation. The project will determine the success of different methods of post-alert follow-up.

Current Status: The Utah Department of Health is in the final stages of building the interface between the program databases and the Child Health Advanced Records Management (CHARM) Data Integration System, and will begin pilot testing the "alert" system by Nov. 2006. (*Updated 10/2006*)