

EHDI Legislation: Ensuring infants are screened for hearing loss

Track: EHDI Program Enhancement

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Presenter: Iman Audiologist

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Hearing loss is one of the most common birth defects identified in the newborn population. In order to help ensure infants with hearing loss are identified as soon as possible, 37 states (as of 2003) have passed legislation related to hearing screening. To assess the impact of enacted legislation state data were analyzed to determine if states with legislation reported a higher percentage of infants screened for hearing loss than states without legislation. Data reported to the Directors of Speech and Hearing Programs in State Health and Welfare Agencies was used to ascertain screening rates. To determine which states have passed hearing screening legislation and their individual requirements a detailed analysis was conducted. This included a review of any reporting requirements and associated rules and regulations (if applicable). While further analyses are planned, preliminary findings indicate that it may be beneficial for states to enact newborn hearing screening legislation. In addition to these findings, this presentation will also examine the impact of specific reporting requirements. For example do states that have legislation mandating data reporting to the state department of health (DOH) have higher rates of initial hearing screenings than states that do not? We anticipate that this information will be helpful to states wishing to revise or pursue hearing screening legislation.

Key words: legislation, rules and regulations, data, reporting requirements

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