

INFANT and CHILD HEALTH

Newborn Metabolic & Sickle Cell Screening



What is the purpose of the program?

To reduce child deaths and disabilities associated with eight inherited metabolic diseases and sickle cell disorders. This program, along with Children 1st and the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening and Intervention program, is part of the State's newborn screening system.

What does the program do?

Maintains and supports a comprehensive, statewide system to assure that all newborns receive screenings for eight inheritable metabolic diseases and for sickle cell disorders. The system includes: testing for these disorders by the Georgia Public Health Laboratory (at no charge); retrieval and follow-up of all infants with positive results; diagnosis and treatment; and counseling. Education and training about what is required by the newborn screening legislation, and how to meet those requirements, is available for all providers. The program is monitored for continuous quality improvement.

How many people are helped by the program?

In FY 2005, over 199,000 newborn screening specimens (blood spots) were tested in the Georgia Public Health Laboratory; 82 infants were diagnosed with metabolic diseases; and 132 infants were diagnosed with sickle cell anemia.

Why is the program important?

Early diagnosis and treatment of these inherited metabolic disorders (by three weeks of age) and sickle cell disorders (by two months of age) prevents irreversible mental retardation in some children, and death in others.

Who is eligible?

All newborns in Georgia are screened as required by law. Newborns who screen positive may also qualify for the Children's Medical Services Program (CMS), based on financial and medical eligibility requirements.

Where are services located?

Statewide

Outcome measures

Increase by 2% each year the percentage of newborns testing positive for inherited metabolic disorders that receive treatment within 21 days of the test result.

Legislative authority

O.C.G.A. 31-12-6 and 31-12-7

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