

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Title: National Technical Resource Center for Newborn Hearing Screening and Intervention

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Problem: The importance of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) is widely recognized, and more than 95% of newborns in the U.S. are now screened for hearing loss. However, many babies who do not pass the screen are lost to follow-up, and there are significant problems linking EHDI systems to diagnostic, early intervention, medical home, and family support activities.

Purpose: This National Technical Resource Center (NTRC) will assist state agencies and other federal and non-federal partners in the development, improvement, and operation of sustainable statewide newborn hearing screening and intervention programs (often referred to as EHDI systems).

Goals: Statewide EHDI systems will ensure that all infants (1) are screened for hearing loss, and those who do not pass the screening (2) receive diagnostic evaluations before 3 months of age and (3) are enrolled in early intervention programs where necessary before 6 months of age. Additional goals include (4) appropriate family support, (5) linkages with a medical home, (6) creating sustainable systems for screening young children for hearing loss throughout early childhood, (7) statewide EHDI data and tracking systems that are linked with other relevant public health data, and (8) disseminating information about EHDI to relevant constituencies.

Methodology: Gaps in the system noted by State EHDI Coordinators, families, collaborators, and other EHDI experts will be addressed through technical assistance activities, including resource development, education and training, forums for communication and coordination, policy initiatives, telehealth technologies, quality improvement activities, and data collection.

Coordination: Activities will be coordinated and often jointly implemented in partnership with professionals and families, in cooperation with individuals and organizations that serve children with hearing loss, State EHDI systems, and appropriate federal agencies.

Evaluation: Needs assessments, data collection, and product/process evaluations will be integrated into all activities. National Advisory Committees will regularly review the workscope and make suggestions for improvement.

Key Words: early hearing detection, newborn hearing screening, early childhood hearing screening, technical assistance, audiology, early intervention

Annotation: Effective early hearing detection and intervention (EHDI) requires linking newborn hearing screening to diagnostic services, early intervention, family support, and medical homes. The National Technical Resource Center will use a National EHDI Assistance Network in collaboration with various professional and advocacy organizations to assist states in the implementation of effective and sustainable statewide EHDI systems.