

## Provider Bulletin

# ENVIRONMENTAL LEAD INVESTIGATION

### BACKGROUND:

Universal lead toxicity screening, by 12 months and at 24 months of age, is a required component of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. Providers are required to screen children between the ages of 36 and 72 months of age if they have not been previously screened for lead poisoning. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that a provider use venous blood samples for the blood lead screening, when feasible as elevated initial blood lead results obtained on capillary screening specimens are presumptive and should be confirmed using a venous specimen.

The CDC indicates that there is no safe level of lead in children; and advises that a provider offer education related to preventing lead exposure to families with young children. For a child who is found to have a blood lead level (BLL) less than 5 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ ), a provider should perform follow-up blood lead monitoring.

In accordance with guidance from the CDC, a provider should manage the condition of a child who is found to have an elevated BLL that is greater than or equal to 5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ . Management should include follow-up blood tests and consideration of possible sources of contamination including housing, food, and toys. Locating the source of lead contamination is an integral part of the management and treatment of lead toxicity.

To that end, a provider may submit an order to an enrolled Environmental Lead Investigator (ELI) provider for a comprehensive environmental lead investigation for an MA beneficiary under 21 years of age with a blood lead screening result of at least 5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$  and where there are environmental influences for lead contamination. The order for a comprehensive environmental lead investigation must include a primary diagnosis code of toxic effect of lead and its components.

### ENVIRONMENTAL LEAD INVESTIGATION:

A comprehensive environmental lead investigation should include analysis by use of portable x-ray fluorescence analyzer on all painted surfaces, an interview with the family of the child to gather basic information about the habits of the child, and, finally, written recommendations to the owner of the house/apartment for the immediate and permanent removal or reduction of the lead sources.

### REQUESTING ENVIRONMENTAL LEAD INVESTIGATION:

Effective July 1, 2017, Gateway Health will cover ELI for members under 21 years of age who are enrolled on Gateway Health Pennsylvania Medicaid within the following parameters:

- Services must be provided by a participating Gateway Health ELI provider.
- Member must have a venous BLL result of at least 5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ .
- Limited to one ELI per household.
- A provider order is required. No prior authorization from Gateway Health is needed.
- The requirements are subject to retrospective review by Gateway's Payment Integrity group.