



January 31, 2019

Dear Medical Provider:

Subject: Newborn Hearing Screening Recommendations and Guidelines

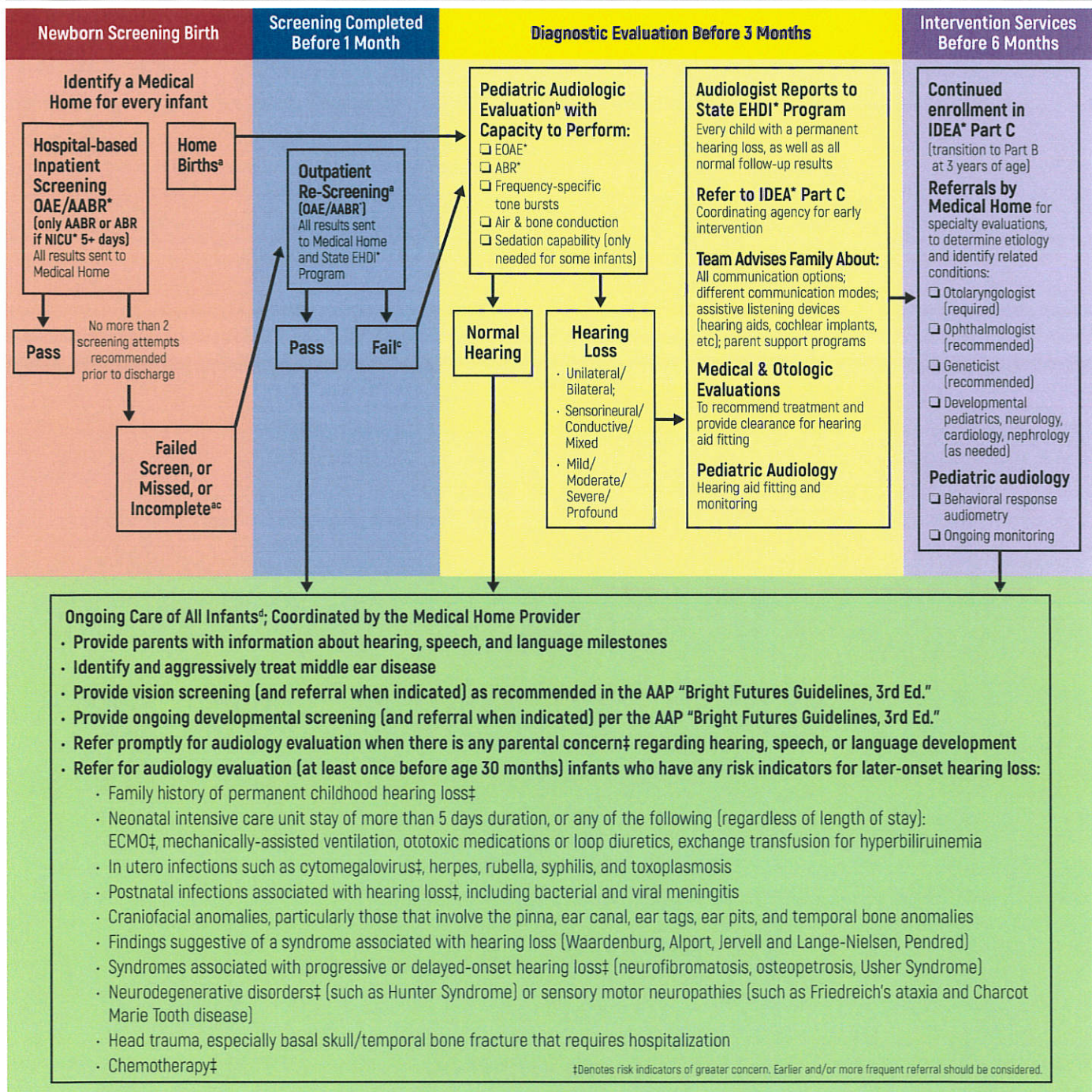
The Alabama Department of Public Health complies with the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) 2007 Position Statement for national standards and guidelines related to universal newborn hearing screening and follow-up. The following is a summary of national recommendations for newborn hearing screening:

- JCIH and the Alabama Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program endorses early hearing detection and intervention to maximize linguistic competence and literacy development for children who may be deaf or hard of hearing.
- NICU infants admitted for more than five days are required to have auditory brainstem response (ABR) included as part of their screening so that neural hearing loss will not be missed. Most birthing hospitals in Alabama use ABR for all infants regardless of NICU admission.
- Referral should be made directly to an audiologist for rescreening on infants who do not pass automated ABR testing in the NICU.
- Infants who pass the initial hearing screening but have a risk factor (NICU admission greater than 5 days) should have at least one diagnostic audiology assessment by 24 to 30 months of age, or at any time if there are developmental milestone concerns.
- For rescreening, a complete screening on both ears is recommended, even if only one ear did not pass the initial hearing screening.
- JCIH recommends newborn hearing screening before one month of age (to include rescreening if an infant did not pass the initial hearing screening at birth), diagnostic hearing evaluation before three months of age (for infants who do not pass the rescreen), and referral to early intervention services before six months of age if identified with hearing loss.
- For infants with confirmed hearing loss, a genetics consultation should be offered to their families, and the infant should be evaluated by an otolaryngologist who has knowledge of pediatric hearing loss.
- All families of infants with any degree of bilateral or unilateral permanent hearing loss should be considered eligible for early intervention services.

A directory of outpatient pediatric hearing screening providers called Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Pediatric Audiology Links to Services (EHDI-PALS), may be found on the Alabama Newborn Screening website at <http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/newbornscreening/newborn-hearing-screening.html>. If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding universal newborn hearing screening, please contact the Alabama EHDI Coordinator at (334) 206-2944.

Mary Ellen Whigham, RN  
Alabama EHDI Coordinator

# EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION (EHDI) GUIDELINES FOR PEDIATRIC MEDICAL HOME PROVIDERS



February 2010 - American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force for Improving Newborn Hearing Screening, Diagnosis and Intervention ([www.medicalhomeinfo.org](http://www.medicalhomeinfo.org))

\*OAE = Otoacoustic Emissions, AABR = Automated Auditory Brainstem Response, ABR = Auditory Brainstem Response, EHDI = Early Hearing Detection and Intervention, IDEA = Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, NICU = Newborn Intensive Care Unit, AAP = American Academy of Pediatrics

**Notes:**

- (a) In screening programs that do not provide Outpatient Screening, infants will be referred directly from Inpatient Screening to Pediatric Audiologic Evaluation. Likewise, infants at higher risk for hearing loss (or loss to follow-up) also may be referred directly to Pediatric Audiology.
- (b) Part C of IDEA\* may provide diagnostic audiologic evaluation services as part of Child Find activities.
- (c) Even infants who fail screening in only one ear should be referred for further testing of both ears
- (d) Includes infants whose parents refused initial or follow-up hearing screening.