

Quality Provider Program: Primary Care Lead Screening: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why does this measure matter?

A: Exposure to lead can cause damage to the brain and other vital organs, as well as intellectual and behavioral deficits. Because children who are exposed to lead often have no obvious symptoms, lead poisoning often goes unrecognized.

Screening for lead is an easy way to detect an abnormal blood lead level in children. There is no safe blood lead level. If not found early, exposure to lead and high blood lead levels can lead to irrevocable effects on a child's physical and mental health.¹

Q: What is SelectHealth doing to help?

A: SelectHealth promotes lead screening by:

- Covering lead testing for all children on Medicaid and CHIP
- Including information about lead testing in well-child exam reminder calls and mailed materials

Q: What are best practices for this measure?

A: Best practices include:

- Developing a screening policy and educating clinic staff
- Following CDC recommendation that children enrolled in Medicaid get tested for lead at ages 12 and 24 months.² Adding lead testing to pre-visit planning and/or EMR alerts
- Using the SelectHealth Gap in Care list to identify patients who need to be tested
- Tracking progress with the SelectHealth Clinical Summary and allowing providers to monitor their performance rates

References:

1. National Council for Quality Assurance (NCQA). *Lead Screening in Children (LSC)*. ncqa.org website. <https://www.ncqa.org/hedis/measures/lead-screening-in-children/>. 2024. Accessed February 14, 2024.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention. *Testing Children for Lead Poisoning*. CDC.gov website. <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/prevention/testing-children-for-lead-poisoning.htm#:~:text=Children%20enrolled%20in%20Medicaid%20are,high%2Drisk%20neighborhoods%20and%20children>. Accessed February 14, 2024.



Questions about the Quality Provider Program?
Contact us at QualityProvider@selecthealth.org.