

# Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Advisory Board



*January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020*

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Submitted to the Joint Standing  
Committee on Health and Human  
Services

2020 Annual Report

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **December 2020**

#### **Background**

The 119th Maine State Legislature passed Public Law 1999, c. 647, adopted under the authority of 22 MSRA c. 1686, §8821-8825 establishing the Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program (MNHP) within the Department of Health and Human Services. The intent of the original legislation was “to enable children and their families and caregivers to obtain information regarding hearing screening and evaluation and to learn about treatment and intervention services at the earliest opportunity in order to prevent or mitigate developmental delays and academic failures associated with undetected hearing loss.”

#### **Purpose**

The Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program statute requires an advisory board to provide oversight and advice to the Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program. Each year, the Board is required to report percentages of infants screened, evaluated, and being offered and receiving early intervention services and treatment to the Joint Committee on Health and Human Services.

#### **Highlights**

This report uses the 2018 data submitted by Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program. The 2019 data will be available in April 2021.

##### **Screening (Total number of births 12,001)**

1. Ninety-eight percent (11,735) of Maine newborns completed a newborn hearing screen.
2. Ninety-eight percent (11,536) of those Maine newborns screened “passed” the screening.
3. Two percent (199) received a “refer” result for further diagnostic evaluation.
4. Two percent (266) of Maine newborns were not screened in 2018; the majority of these unscreened newborns, 74 percent (196), were home births.

##### **Audiological Evaluation**

5. Sixty-nine percent (137) of those infants who received a “refer” result received a completed audiological evaluation.
  - Seventeen percent (23) were identified with a hearing loss and 83 percent (114) were evaluated and were found to have hearing within normal limits.

## **Early Intervention**

6. One hundred percent (23) of Maine children with a confirmed hearing loss were referred to Child Development Services (Part-C).
  - The Maine Newborn Hearing Program received information that 61 percent (14) of those infants were entered into early intervention services.
  - Of those receiving early intervention services, 86 percent (12) of infants with a confirmed hearing loss were receiving early intervention services by six months of age.

**For more information on the MNHP:** Contact Anne Banger, Newborn Hearing Program Coordinator, Genetics and Hearing Program, [anne.banger@maine.gov](mailto:anne.banger@maine.gov) or 207-287-8427  
[www.mainepublichealth.gov/MNHP](http://www.mainepublichealth.gov/MNHP)

## Full Report

### Background

The purpose of the Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program (MNHP) is to support early identification and timely and appropriate intervention for hearing loss. The Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have provided national goals to each state's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (EHDI), which in Maine is called the Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program. These national goals have been established to ensure that hearing screening for all newborns occurs no later than at one month of age. It also aims to ensure diagnostic audiological evaluations as early as possible, (but no later than three months of age for those who do not pass the screening) and enrollment in early intervention services, as early as possible (but no later than six months of age for those identified with hearing loss).

### Legislation and Rules

The Maine Newborn Hearing Advisory Board was created by the 119th Maine State Legislature through the enactment of Public Law 1999, c 647, 22 M. R. S. A. c. 1686.

### Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Advisory Board

The Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Advisory Board (referred to as The Board) consists of an odd number of members, appointed by the Governor, including but not limited to: an audiologist, a physician, a speech-language pathologist, a nurse, a certified teacher of deaf people, an early intervention services provider to children who are deaf or hard of hearing through the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH), a person who is Culturally Deaf, a person who is hard-of-hearing or deaf, a parent of a child who is Culturally Deaf, a parent of a child who is hard-of hearing or deaf, a parent of a hearing child, and a representative of each of the following: hospitals, health insurance carriers, early childhood special education program under Title 20-A, Chapter 303, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

The purpose and duties of The Board, as set forth in statute, are to:

- Provide oversight and advice to the Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program.
- Advise the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services on issues relating to the Program.
- Make recommendations on the procedures for hearing screening, evaluation, treatment, and intervention services.
- Submit an annual report on the percentages of children being screened and evaluated, as well as those children being offered and receiving intervention and treatment services, to the Joint Committee on Health and Human Services.

**MNHP Advisory Board Members  
December 31, 2020**

<b>Audiologist –</b> Eileen Peterson, M. S. , FAAA	<b>Physician –</b> Duska Thurston, MD (Chair)
<b>Speech-Language Pathologist –</b> Louise Packness, CCC-SLP	<b>Nurse –</b> Nola Metcalf, RN-C
<b>Certified teacher of the deaf –</b> Donna Casavant, MED, CAS	<b>ECFS EI service provider –</b> Karen Hopkins, M. Ed. CAGS
<b>Culturally Deaf person –</b> Catherine Lushman	<b>Hard of hearing or deaf person –</b> Harriet Gray, ph.D
<b>Parent of a child who is Culturally Deaf –</b> Jennifer Gaulin	<b>Parent of a hard of hearing or deaf child –</b> Laura Sweet
<b>Parent of a hearing child –</b> Vacant	<b>Representative of hospitals –</b> Leigh Anne Gorecki
<b>Representative of health insurance carriers</b> Vacant	<b>Representative of Child Development Services (CDS) –</b> Ariana Whiting, LMSW-cc
<b>Representative of DHHS –</b> Nicole Dotson	<b>Other –</b> Susan Delaney, CPM
<b>Other –</b> Katherine Duncan, Au.D. (Co-chair)	

During calendar year 2020, the Board met two times virtually a third meeting was canceled due to coronavirus restrictions and conducted business that included discussions on:

- Updating the Program’s website
- Updating the Program’s rules
- Issues connected with Board vacancies
- The submission of the USCDC EHDI data for Maine
- Reviewing and updating MNHP publications and brochures
- Screening home birth babies
- COVID-19 Impacts

*Program Description*

The Maine Newborn Hearing Program was established by law in 2000 to provide information to families about hearing screening, evaluation and available services. The program is also charged with maintaining data as it relates to newborn hearing.

*Personnel and Funding Sources*

The Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program (MNHP) is funded through two Federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Grants and one dedicated revenue account identified below:

1. The Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a three-year, \$160,000/year grant (2020-2024) that funds the following:
  - Fifty percent of the State MNHP Coordinator position, which also includes 50 percent of the rent, computer and telephone services, and parking expenses.

- A contract with Nebulogic to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Program's updated data tracking and surveillance system an updated tracking and surveillance system that went live October 1, 2019.
  - Travel to attend the National Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Grantee annual meeting.
2. The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) that funds the following:
- Fifty percent of the State MNHP Coordinator position, which also includes 50 percent of the rent, computer and telephone services, and parking expenses.

### Goals and Activities

The seven national goals for achieving a comprehensive, coordinated, community-based system of services are:

1. **Screening** - All infants will be screened for hearing loss by one month of age, preferably before hospital discharge.
2. **Diagnostic Audiology** - All infants who screen positive will have a diagnostic audiological evaluation before three months of age.
3. **Early Intervention** - All infants identified with a hearing loss will begin receiving appropriate early intervention services before six months of age.
4. **Family Support** - All infants and children with late onset, progressive or acquired hearing loss will be identified at the earliest possible time.
5. **Medical Home** - All infants with hearing loss will have a medical home.
6. **Data Management** – Each state will develop a tracking and surveillance system that ensures that babies referred from the screening receive appropriate and timely diagnostic audiological and early intervention services.
7. **Evaluation** – Each state will develop an evaluation plan that improves the overall effectiveness of the service delivery system and meets the needs of families.

This report uses 2018 data submitted by the Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Birth Defects Prevention and Developmental Disabilities, Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (CDC/NCBDDD/EHDI) to describe screening, evaluation, early intervention services, and the demographic characteristics of the population. The 2019 screening data will be available in April 2021.

### Hearing Screen Data

The primary goal of the Maine Newborn Hearing Program is to ensure that every child born in Maine is screened for hearing loss and that those with a confirmed hearing loss are referred to Child Development Services for early intervention services. *Healthy People 2020* set the benchmark for screening no later than age one month at 90.2 percent. Maine continues to exceed the goal with a screening rate of 98 percent.

**Objective:** Increase the proportion of newborns who are screened for hearing loss no later than age one month

**Baseline:** 82.0% of Maine newborns aged one month or less had screening for hearing loss in 2007.

**Target:** 90.2%

**Achieved: 96.1% 2018**

In 2018, the Maine CDC Data, Research and Vital Statistics reported that there were a total of 12,001 births in Maine. The total number of infants screened was 11,735 (98%). The percentage of Maine newborns who “passed” a screening was 98 percent or 11,536 infants. A total of 199 infants (2%) did “not pass” the initial screen and any subsequent rescreening and were subsequently “referred”.

**Table 1: Number of Infants Not Screened in 2018**

Infants not Screened					
Total not screened	Infant died	Parents declined screening	Parents Contacted but Unresonsive	Transferred out-of-state	Missed
266 (2%)	46	18	2	1	199
<b>Data Source: CDC/NCBDDD/EHDI 2018</b>					

Further analysis of the 199 infants who “missed” the newborn hearing screen reveals the following: 196 were home births; and two missed hospital screening prior to discharge and one missed home birth, ended up getting full diagnostic testing.

Diagnostic Data

According to the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM), if a baby does not pass the initial newborn hearing screening, the next step in the process is the diagnostic evaluation. The objective is to have the diagnostic tests completed as soon as possible, preferably before three months of age. The diagnostic evaluation should be performed by a pediatric audiologist with expertise working with infants and children.

*Healthy People 2020* has established the following objective related to newborns receiving an audiological evaluation after a “refer” at screening.

**Objective:** Increase the proportion of newborns who receive audiological evaluation no later than age three months for infants who did not pass the hearing screening.

**Baseline:** 66.0% of Maine infants aged three months and under who did not pass the hearing screening received audiological evaluation in 2007.

**Target:** 72.6%

**Achieved: 55.3% in 2018**

As reported above, the percentage of newborns who were “referred” after the initial screen and any subsequent rescreening was 2 percent or 199 infants. Sixty-nine percent (137) of infants who were referred on their hearing screen received a diagnostic evaluation and the program received a report. Eighty percent (110) of those children received a diagnostic evaluation no later than three months of age.

**Table 2: The percentage and number of infants who received an audiological (diagnostic) evaluation during 2018**

<b>Diagnostic Evaluation</b>			
<b>Total not pass “refer”</b>	<b>Total infants with normal hearing</b>	<b>Total infants diagnosed with hearing loss</b>	<b>Total infants with no diagnosis</b>
199	114 (57%)	23 (12%)	62 (31%)
<b>Data Source: CDC/NCBDDD/EHDI 2017</b>			

Further analysis of the 62 newborns with no diagnosis reveals the following: eight children’s audiological diagnosis is in process, three children were non-residents, one child died, four families declined follow-up, thirty families were unresponsive to multiple attempts at contact, and one family could not be contacted .

Early Intervention Data

*Healthy People 2020* has established the following objective related to infants who are enrolled in early intervention services.

**Objective:** Increase the proportion of infants with confirmed hearing loss who are enrolled for intervention services no later than age six months.

**Baseline:** 50.0% of Maine infants aged six months and under with confirmed hearing loss were enrolled for intervention service in 2007.

**Target:** 55.0%

**Achieved: 52.2% for 2018**

There were a total of 23 infants diagnosed with hearing loss who did not pass their newborn hearing screen. All 23 (100%) were referred to Child Development Services (CDS), Part C Early Intervention (EI) Services. The Maine Newborn Hearing Program received confirmation that 14 children were receiving early intervention services from Child Development Services. The Maine CDC Newborn Hearing Program can confirm that one family declined any further services and one family could not be contacted by Part C CDS.

**Table 3: Percentage and number of children enrolled in Part C early intervention services.**

<b>Total children enrolled in Part C</b>		
	<b>Total enrolled</b>	<b>Total enrolled before 6 months of age</b>
<b>Part-C</b>	14 (61%)	9 (86%)
<b>Data Source: CDC/NCBDDD/EHDI 2018</b>		

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA): Part C - early intervention program for infants and toddlers provides a broad array of services to children with special health needs and developmental disabilities, birth through three years of age. In Maine, Child Development Services is responsible for the Part C services.

**Appendix A**

**2018 Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Data  
January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018**

**2018 EHDI Data-Maine**

Note: Shaded areas provide further detail on the babies reported as not screened, no diagnosis, unknown, and early intervention

Criteria	Number	Percentage (%)
<b>Number of Births</b>	<b>12,001</b>	
Hospital births	11,763	98%
Non-hospital births	238	2%
<b>SCREENING DATA</b>		
<b>Screened</b>	<b>11,735</b>	<b>98%</b>
Hospital births screened	11,722	99%
Home birth screened	41	17%
Screen complete by 1 month	11,533	98%
<b>Not screened</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>2%</b>
Infant died	46	
Parents declined services	18	
Non-resident	0	
Infant transferred out of state, no documentation of screen	1	
Missed screening	201	2%
Missed-home birth	196	
Missed-hospital birth, had full diagnostics	2	
Missed-unresponsive	2	
Missed-homebirth went for full diagnostics	1	
<b>Pass screening</b>	<b>11,536</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Not pass screening</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>DIAGNOSTIC DATA</b>		
<b>Not pass screening-MNHP received audiological report w/diagnosis complete</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>69%</b>
Diagnosis complete by 3 months	110	80%
Hearing normal	114	
Hearing loss	23	
<b>Total-no diagnosis received</b>	<b>62</b>	
Infant died	1	
Non-resident/Moved out of state	3	
Unable to test due to medical reasons	0	
Audiological Diagnosis in Process	8	
Family declined follow-up	4	

<b>Lost to documentation/follow-up</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>23%</b>
Family contacted but unresponsive	30	
Unable to contact	1	
Cost of Testing	0	
Tests done out of state; unable to get results	1	
Went to audiologist done but not best practice	14	

<b>EARLY INTERVENTION DATA</b>		
<b>Refer NHS, Hearing Loss, referred to Part C provider-CDS</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Refer NHS, Hearing Loss-MNHP received confirmation of enrollment with Part C Provider-CDS</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>61%</b>
Documentation of IFSP date received	14	100%
<b>Enrolled in EI by 6 months</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>52%</b>
Family contacted but unresponsive	0	
Family declined EI	1	
Ineligible for Part C Services	0	
<b>Lost to documentation/follow-up</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35%</b>
Unable to contact	0	
Unknown	8	



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