

## TITLE

**NEWBORN BLOOD SPOT SCREENING: CONTACTING PARENTS OR GUARDIANS**

## SCOPE

Provincial

## DOCUMENT #

HC3-32-03

## APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Vice President &amp; Chief Operations Officer, Central and Southern Alberta

## INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE

October 2, 2013

## SPONSOR

Senior Program Officer Population, Public &amp; Indigenous Health

## REVISION EFFECTIVE DATE

March 1, 2023

## PARENT DOCUMENT TITLE, TYPE, AND NUMBER

Newborn Blood Spot Screening Policy (#HCS-32)

## SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE

June 5, 2022

**NOTE:** The first appearance of terms in bold in the body of this document (except titles) are defined terms – please refer to the Definitions section.

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**OBJECTIVES**

- To outline a reasonable number and sequence of attempts to contact the **parent** or **guardian** of an infant when an initial or repeat **sample collection** is required.
- To ensure every effort is made to collect the **sample** within 96 hours of receiving communication that a sample collection is required.

**APPLICABILITY**

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).

**ELEMENTS****1. Contacting Parents or Guardians of Infants Requiring Sample Collection**

- 1.1 **Zone public health nursing services** shall make three (3) attempts to contact the parent or guardian over the telephone using different days and times of the day as appropriate. Additional contact attempts may be made at the discretion of the **most responsible health practitioner (MRHP)**.
  - a) Alternative telephone numbers shall be used if available when there is no voice mail or answering machine, or the telephone number is out of service.

- b) If there is an answering machine or voice mail, or a person other than the infant's parent or guardian answers the phone, a message shall be left for the parent or guardian to return the telephone call.
- 1.2 If there has been no contact with or response from the parent or guardian after telephone contact attempts have been made, the infant's Physician or Midwife shall be notified and a letter (refer to the ANSP staff education resource *ANSP Sample Letter for Contacting Parents/Guardians*) shall be mailed to the parent or guardian in accordance with zone-specific practices which include:
- a) information about the need for and importance of sample collection or repeat sample collection, and the notification of the infant's Physician or Midwife;
- b) the attempts made to contact the parent or guardian; and
- c) a contact name and telephone number for the parent or guardian to respond in an urgent manner.
- 1.3 Actions shall be documented in the infant's **health record** by the MRHP and communicated to the **Alberta Newborn Screening Program (ANSP) (formerly the Newborn Metabolic Screening (NMS) Program) coordination team**.
- 1.4 For additional information about contacting parents or guardians, see the ANSP staff education resource *Finding the Family Essentials*.
- 2. Arranging Sample Collection or Repeat Sample Collection**
- 2.1 When contact is made with the parent or guardian, sample collection shall be arranged in accordance with the Alberta Health Services (AHS) *Newborn Blood Spot Screening Sample Collection* Procedure.
- a) The parent or guardian shall be informed of the collection location options available in their local area.
- 2.2 If it is determined that the infant has a new location of residence outside of Alberta, refer to Section 14.1 of the AHS *Newborn Blood Spot Screening Follow-up* Procedure.
- 2.3 If the parent or guardian does not book and/or present for sample collection on three (3) separate occasions, refer to Section 14.2 of the AHS *Newborn Blood Spot Screening Follow-up* Procedure.
- 2.4 Actions shall be documented in the infant's health record and communicated to the ANSP coordination team.
- 2.5 For additional information about arranging sample collection for parents or guardians who do not present for sample collection, see the ANSP staff

education resources *Special Situations when Following Up Essentials* and *Following Up on Infants Essentials*.

## DEFINITIONS

**Alberta Newborn Screening Program (ANSP) (formerly the Newborn Metabolic Screening Program) coordination team** means the Alberta Health Services designated team within Population, Public and Indigenous Health that integrates, organizes and manages the Alberta Newborn Screening Program and its operations.

**Guardian** means, where applicable:

For a Minor:

- a) A guardian as defined by the *Family Law Act*, a divorced parent with custody of the minor, or a person appointed pursuant to a will, personal directive, court order, agreement or by authorization of legislation (e.g. *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*).

For an Adult:

- a) an individual appointed by the Court in accordance with the *Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act* to make to make decisions on behalf of the adult patient when the adult patient lacks capacity.

**Health record** means the Alberta Health Services legal record of the patient's diagnostic, treatment and care information.

**Most responsible health practitioner (MRHP)** means the health practitioner who has responsibility and accountability for the specific treatment/procedure(s) provided to a patient and who is authorized by Alberta Health Services to perform the duties required to fulfill the delivery of such a treatment/procedure(s) within the scope of their practice.

**Parent** means the adult guardian of a child with the legal authority to make decisions of behalf of the minor in accordance with the Alberta *Family Law Act*.

**Sample** means the blood spots and health information collected on the requisition card for the purpose of newborn blood spot screening.

**Sample collection** means the process of completing the requisition card and poking the infant's heel to obtain the blood spots for the purpose of newborn blood spot screening.

**Zone public health nursing services** means the public health nursing services responsible for providing newborn blood spot screening services at the zone level.

## REFERENCES

- Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
  - *Newborn Blood Spot Screening Policy* (#HCS-32)
  - *Newborn Blood Spot Screening Follow-up Procedure* (#HCS-32-01)
  - *Newborn Blood Spot Screening Sample Collection Procedure* (#HCS-32-02)

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- Alberta Health Services Resources:
  - *Finding the Family Essentials*
  - *Following Up on Infants Essentials*
  - *ANSP Sample Letter for Contacting Parents or Guardians*
  - *Special Situations when Following Up Essentials*

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