



STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

Donald E. Williamson, MD
State Health Officer

June 3, 2011

Dear Provider,

This letter is being sent to you to address outpatient hearing screens for infants who have failed their initial hearing screens in a birthing facility. A synopsis of important points follows:

- The State of Alabama complies with the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) 2007 Position Statement for guidelines to newborn hearing screening and follow-up.
- Improved technology provides screening to infants without the use of sedation; therefore repeat screening can be completed quickly and easily before infants become more mobile and difficult to test.
- There are two methods of automated testing: Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) and Auditory Brainstem Response (AABR).
- OAE is for well-baby nurseries but AABR is required for NICU infants. Some hospitals only perform AABR for all infants regardless of risk factors.
- An infant that fails initial screening can be re-screened with the same method of testing, however AABR can be used after failed OAE since it is a more sensitive and comprehensive test. **Infants that fail AABR must have a repeat AABR for follow-up screening. Both ears should be retested.**
- Infants who fail the repeat or second hearing screen should be referred for audiological/medical evaluation.
- JCIH "1/3/6" rule requires screening by one month, diagnostics by three months, and intervention by six months.
- A directory of screening providers, with methods of testing, is posted on our website. If you are not listed and would like to be, please contact us. Visit www.adph.org/newbornscreening
- If you are interested in becoming an outpatient AABR testing site, grants will be awarded as funds are available for assisting in the purchase of equipment.

The hospital staff, local social workers, or our office can provide you with the information you need regarding initial test results when parents are unable to do so. If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding this matter, please contact our office at 334-206-2944.

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