

Health Measure TIPS (To Improve Performance Sheet): Developmental Screening in the First 3 Years of Life



Importance of the Quality Measure

One in six children aged 3-17 years have developmental disabilities that affect how they play, learn, speak, act or move.¹ Early identification of developmental disorders is critical to the well-being of children and their families. It is an essential function and the responsibility of all pediatric healthcare professionals to provide this screening and to assure that any concerns noted during the assessment are promptly addressed.² Early identification of developmental issues, along with timely referrals to specialists and services, can improve the developmental outcomes across the lifespan of a child. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children be screened for developmental delays and disabilities during regular well-child visits at nine, 18, 24, and 30 months.³

Please note that the Department of Social Services reimburses for developmental and behavioral health screenings, including those that are performed at intervals outside of the annual Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) visit.

This quality metric is recognized by a number of national quality improvement measure stewards, and supports an objective of the *Healthy People 2030* initiative developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

Quality Measure Description

The percentage of children screened for risk of developmental, behavioral, and social delays, using a standardized screening tool in the 12 months preceding their first, second, or third birthday

HUSKY Health wants to help you improve your developmental screening rates for children ages one-three years, and improve health outcomes for your HUSKY Health patients. Adherence to this measure is determined by claims data.

Required Medical Record Documentation:

For children who had a developmental screening using a standardized, validated tool in the 12 months preceding their birthday, the following documentation must be in the medical record:

- Date of service
- Documentation of the validated screening tool used (Refer to Provider Bulletin 2015-70 for validated tools for this measure.)
- Evidence of a screening result (positive or negative) or screening score (a numeric value associated with the validated screening tool)

*Code for Developmental Screening

CODE	MODIFIERS
96110	Use modifier U3 for a positive screen and U4 for a negative screen.

Quality Improvement Opportunities

- Educate parents/caretakers to monitor for developmental milestones such as smiling, waving, crawling, first steps
- Educate parents/caretakers and assess for risk factors for developmental delays such as, preterm birth, low birth weight, lead exposure, etc.
- Optimize workflows so parents/caretakers can complete valid screenings prior to scheduled well-visit checks
- Refer child to the appropriate specialist based on screening tool outcomes, and determine follow-up

Tools & Resources for Healthcare Professionals

- Developmental Monitoring and Screening for Health Professionals:
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening-hcp.html#:~:text=Developmental%20screening%20with%20a%20validated,and%20lead%20exposure%2C%20among%20others.>
- Developmental Surveillance Resources for Healthcare Providers:
https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/hcp/index.html#resources-anchor_1585340748732

Resources for Patients and Families

- CDC, Learn More about Your Child's Development: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/Dev-Mon-and-Screen-English-and-Spanish-P.pdf>
- CDC, Concerned About Your Child's Development?: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/concerned.html>

Additional Information on HUSKY Health

For information on quality improvement, quality measures, or the programs and services made available through the HUSKY Health program:

- Visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/husky>, click "**Information for Providers**", then "**Health Measures**" under the "**Reports & Resources**" menu item
- Email: Quality@chnct.org
- Call: 1.866.317.3301

References

¹Centers for Disease Control. CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early," Program. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/LTASE-program-one-pager-P.pdf>

²Centers for Disease Control. (2021). Developmental Monitoring and Screening for Health Professionals. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening-hcp.html>

³American Academy of Pediatrics. (2021). Recommendations for Preventative Pediatric Health Care. Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics. https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf

*Code sets are routinely updated. Please reference the current year's manuals when billing for services. Not all codes listed above are reimbursable. For a list of codes reimbursed by DSS, please refer to the Physician Office and Outpatient Services Fee Schedule on the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program website: www.ctdssmap.com.