

Health Measure TIPS (To Improve Performance Sheet): Behavioral Health Screening in the First 18 Years of Life



Importance of the Quality Measure

Approximately 1 in 5 children have a mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder such as anxiety, depression, ADHD, and disruptive behavior disorder.¹ It is recommended that behavioral health screenings be performed annually at regular well-child visits beginning at birth, and through age 18.² Early identification of behavioral disorders is crucial to the well-being of children and their families. An early diagnosis and treatment for mental health disorders can support a child's healthy development and may prevent problems extending into adulthood. Screening for behavioral health issues generates timely referrals to specialists and services. It is the Department of Social Services' (DSS) goal that all HUSKY Health members ages one to eighteen receive a developmental and/or behavioral health screen, at least annually.

Please note that the Department of Social Services will reimburse 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 several 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 ages 1 to 18 years who received a behavioral health screening during the measurement year.

*HUSKY Health wants to help you improve your behavioral health screening rates in the first 18 years of life and improve health outcomes for your HUSKY Health patients. **Adherence to this measure is determined by claims data.***

Required Medical Record Documentation

- Date of service for the behavioral health screening
- Documentation of the validated screening tool used (e.g. PHQ-2, Whole Child Assessment) For a complete list, please refer to AAP STAR Center
- Evidence of a screening result, positive or negative, or a screening score that includes a numeric value associated with the validated screening tool

References:

¹ CDC. (November 2022). Improving Access to Children's Mental Health Care. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/access.html>

² American Academy of Pediatrics. (July 2022). Recommendations for Preventative Pediatric Health Care. Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics. Retrieved from: https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf

*Code for Behavioral Health Screening

CODE	MODIFIERS
96127	Use modifier U3 for a positive screen and U4 for a negative screen

*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.

Quality Improvement Opportunities

- Assess for risk factors for developmental problems such as preterm birth and low birthweight, and environmental risks like lead exposure
- Incorporate workflows for staff to provide parents/guardians with screening forms prior to the visit so they can be reviewed together with the provider
- Optimize EHR system to prompt validated behavioral health screening tool and documentation
- Be sure to discuss mental and behavioral health in a destigmatizing manner

Tools & Resources for Healthcare Professionals

- American Academy of Pediatrics, Bright Futures Toolkit: Links to Commonly Used Screening Instruments and Tools. Refer to Behavioral/social/emotional recommended screenings for newborn through 21 years: <https://publications.aap.org/toolkits/resources/15625/Bright-Futures-Toolkit-Links-to-Commonly-Used?searchresult=1>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Screening and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder for Healthcare Providers: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/hcp-screening.html>
- CDC, Parent Training in Behavior Management for ADHD: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/behavior-therapy.html>

Resources for Patients & Families

- CDC, Anxiety and Depression in Children: Get the Facts: <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/features/anxiety-depression-children.html>
- CDC, Child Development, Positive Parenting Tips: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/index.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