



Meeting Minutes Draft: EHDI Newborn Hearing Screening Advisory Committee August 20, 2025

Minutes prepared by: Bridget Walde and Sara Lammert

Location: Zoom

Attendance

Present: Ingrid Aasan, Anne Barlow, Joan Boddicker, Mary Cashman-Bakken, Kirsten Coverstone, Darcia Dierking, Kathleen Geraghty, Danelle Gournaris, Hannah Herd, Calla Kevan, Abby Meyer, Jess Moen, Jessica Novak, Sara Oberg, Cat Tamminga Flores, Katie Warne, Jay Wyant

Absent: Colleen Vitzthum, Tina Huang, Terry Wilding, Joscelyn Martin, Emily Smith-Lundberg, Gloria Nathanson, Elizabeth Pai

Minutes

Welcome and announcements

Jesi Novak called the meeting to order. Roll call was conducted through the chat. Cat Tamminga Flores made a motion to approve the minutes. Mary Cashman-Bakken seconded.

EHDI family story – Elena Miranda

Elena Miranda, Cultural Parent Guide Lead at Minnesota Hands & Voices, shared about the role of Parent Guides, including Cultural Parent Guides and regional Parent Guides. Parent Guides call families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing to provide unbiased information and resources. In-person and virtual visits are offered, including co-visits with other programs like Deaf and Hard of Hearing Guides. Parent Guides also make referrals to other programs, like early intervention, Deaf Mentor Family Services, etc. Elena shared information about how many calls and visits she has completed over the past several years. She also shared tips for connecting with parents, such as building trust, meeting families where they are at in their journey, and letting families use their preferred choice of words. Elena shared some of the preferred choices of words families have shared with her. She shared a tip sheet to use when meeting with families. She also shared that the Beginnings book has a glossary of terms that can be useful when working with interpreters.

Education updates – Cat Tamminga Flores, Mary Cashman-Bakken, Jess Moen

Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) submitted federal reporting for Part C, Part B 619 and Part B this year. Both Part C and Part B received Meets Requirements based on data submitted for Federal Fiscal Year 2023

(submitted in February 2025). This means that Minnesota needs minimal technical assistance from their partners at the federal government. Part C had previously received Needs Assistance and is wrapping up their technical assistance plan that was required as part of this determination. Cat Tamminga Flores shared the indicators that Part C reports on, compliance indicators (set at 0% or 100%) and performance indicators (Minnesota sets these indicators). The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) uses formulas to determine state progress on indicators and entity determinations.

Cat also shared new early childhood resources that are available. Resources included a tip sheet to explain the difference between evaluation, screening and assessment; nature-based early learning resources; early literacy courses; and additional professional development opportunities. She also shared that Minnesota's early learning standards, the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, were recently updated.

Mary Cashman-Bakken shared that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Report from MDE is planned for next year.

Jess Moen shared an upcoming language and learning series for educators and professionals in Minnesota supporting children who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families to learn about language acquisition, assessments, and strategy. The series is a partnership with MDE, Beacon Center, and Language First, and it is free for Minnesota professionals. Jess also shared information about congenital CMV resources available from Minnesota Low Incidence Projects, including a congenital CMV 101 packet. The packet was designed for educators but can be shared with others too.

Updates to the Guidelines for Referrals and vote – Bridget Walde and workgroup members

At the May 2025 meeting, there was a call for workgroup members to assist with updating the Guidelines for Referral to Early Intervention, Medical Specialties, and Connection to Parent-to-Parent and Family Support. The workgroup met in July 2025, and a draft of the updated Guideline was sent to Advisory Committee members on August 6, 2025 for review.

Updates included adding the Respect for Identities statement; updating the Background to align with other recent updates; adding new resources like the Exploring Communication Opportunities website and Hearing Loss in One ear brochure; updating the References and Selected Links sections to align with other updates and ensure relevancy. The "Referrals to Early Intervention" section was split into two sections: Early intervention (birth through age 2) and Special Education for children 3 years or older. Additional details for clarity and to align with best practices were added to this section, such as adding information about parent consent and releases of information.

It was suggested to add "persistent" to the following sentence in the Background: "This document provides recommendations for audiologists as they proceed with referrals to follow-up care and other medical specialists for infants and young children who are newly identified with permanent/persistent hearing loss." Mary Cashman-Bakken motioned to approve and Darcia Dierking seconded.

A new section titled "Schools and programs serving children who are DHH / DB" was added to the Guideline. It was suggested that additional clarifying details were added as follows: "*In addition to free early intervention and public special education services mentioned above, there are a broad range of schools and programs available, some of which may be private and incur a fee, for children who are DHH/DB.* For a comprehensive list that

audiologists could share with families, see Educational Resources, Schools and Programs from the Department of Human Services Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing State Services.”. Darcia Dierking motioned to approve and Abby Meyer seconded.

Finally, minor updates were made to align current program descriptions and recommendations for medical specialist evaluations. It was suggested to add a website link for the Minnesota DeafBlind Project under “How to Connect” as they receive their referrals mainly by web. Anne Barlow motioned to approve and Ingrid Aasan seconded. Danelle Gournaris and Mary Cashman-Bakken offered a motion/second about adding the website for the Deaf Mentors to the narrative. The group discussed the way program contact and website information is presented throughout the guideline, and after further discussion, Danelle and Mary withdrew their motion. In lieu of having more individual motions about updating program contacts, MDH agreed to review listed contact information for each program (including the Deaf Mentor Family Service program) to ensure that the contact information highlighted in the narrative/paragraph portion of the guideline is the preferred way each program wants to be contacted (i.e. phone, email, website, etc). Whenever possible, the guideline will refer readers to program websites in the selected links section so that long website URLs can be most easily updated as they change in the future.

The proposed changes were approved through an electronic vote.

Closure/adjournment

- A call was made for workgroup members to assist with updating the Guidelines for Pediatric Amplification. The workgroup will meet once or twice over the next couple of months.
- The Congenital Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Public Health and Policy Conference is in September 2025 in Minneapolis.
- The Advisory Committee recognized and thanked Mary Cashman-Bakken for her many years of work!

Next Meeting

Date: November 19, 2025

Time: 1-4pm

Location: BrightWorks, 2 Pine Tree Drive, Suite 101, Arden Hills, Minnesota, 55112

Agenda items: submit proposed agenda items to health.edhi@state.mn.us.

Decisions Made

- The Guidelines for Referral to Early Intervention, Medical Specialties, and Connection to Parent-to-Parent and Family Support, with the updates discussed during the meeting, were approved by the committee.

Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) Program

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