

August 2026



TINY TESTS, BIG IMPACT: THE NEWBORN SCREENING UPDATE

Public Health Services Administration

Newborn Screening Specimen Collection: Tips to Reduce Unsatisfactory Samples

The unsatisfactory rate for the entire state of Maryland was **13.4%** in Q1 of calendar year 2026.

A quality newborn screening specimen is essential for accurate and timely results. Unsatisfactory specimens can delay screening, require repeat collections, and may postpone diagnosis for conditions where early treatment is critical.

Tips for a Successful Bloodspot Collection:

ICYMI - In Case You Missed It

Provider Request Form

Click [here](#) to update specimen information, submit a newborn screening refusal form, order lab slips, or request sickle cell trait results.

Webinars

Click [here](#) to view recordings of the recent NBS webinars under "Webinar Recordings" on the right side of the page.

Educational Materials

Click [here](#) to order Newborn Screening educational materials for your patients and families.

- **Collect at the appropriate time:** Follow state guidelines for timing of collection to ensure accurate screening results.
- **Warm the heel before collection:** Use a heel warmer for 3-5 minutes to improve blood flow and support adequate specimen collection.
- **Use the correct puncture site:** Collect from the medial or lateral plantar surface of the heel to avoid injury.
- **Allow a large blood drop to form:** Wipe away the first drop and apply a single, large drop to fully saturate each filter paper circle.
- **Avoid layering blood:** Do not apply multiple drops to the same circle or add blood to a partially dried spot, as this can affect test accuracy and result in rejection.
- **Avoid contamination:** Do not touch the filter paper circles, apply blood from both sides, or use capillary tubes/EDTA tubes.
- **Dry specimens properly:** Allow cards to air dry flat before packaging and transport.
- **Send specimens promptly:** Timely transport helps preserve specimen integrity and supports faster reporting.

Reducing unsatisfactory specimens helps ensure newborns receive timely screening, follow-up, and care when it matters most.

Provider Contact Information

Please complete this [form](#) to provide the direct phone number for a clinical staff member at your facility/practice. This will prevent delays in notifying providers of critical results.

Cases Not Identified Through Newborn Screening Form

Do you know of a newborn screening condition that was not identified through the newborn screening (NBS) process? We encourage you to report it using our Cases Not Identified Through Newborn Screening Form.

Your submission helps support quality improvement efforts and strengthens newborn screening systems to better serve families and healthcare providers.

Please complete this [form](#) if you would like to report a case that was not detected through NBS.

The Maryland Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Dashboard provides an interactive resource to explore and understand key health indicators affecting mothers, infants, children, and families across the state. The dashboard supports data-driven decision-making by bringing together important maternal and child health information to identify trends, monitor outcomes, and guide quality improvement efforts.

A recent dashboard update expands available newborn screening information by incorporating data from newborn hearing screening, Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD) screening, and newborn bloodspot screening. These enhancements provide greater visibility into screening performance and follow-up processes, including:

- Screening completion
- Bloodspot transit times
- Unsatisfactory specimen rates and trends

This expanded data will help healthcare providers, public health partners, and stakeholders better understand screening processes, identify opportunities for improvement, and support timely follow-up for Maryland's newborns. By improving access to meaningful data, Maryland continues to strengthen efforts to ensure every infant receives timely, accurate screening and every family has access to the resources needed for healthy outcomes.

Click [here](#) to view the dashboard.

To support immediate follow-up on unsatisfactory specimens, the Newborn Screening (NBS) Team will begin distributing daily automated reports to birth facilities this September.

Please complete [this form](#) to designate the team members who should receive these updates. We strongly advise selecting representatives across all relevant departments, including Nursery/NICU, Laboratory, and Quality Improvement.

Disorder Spotlight: Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD)

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) is a genetic disorder caused by changes in the DMD gene, which affects the production of dystrophin, a protein needed for healthy muscle function. Without adequate dystrophin, muscles become progressively weaker over time.

DMD primarily affects boys and may lead to signs such as delayed motor milestones, frequent falls, difficulty climbing stairs, and progressive muscle

weakness. Early identification allows families to connect with specialists, supportive services, and available therapies that may help improve outcomes and quality of life.

As part of Maryland's continued efforts to expand newborn screening, Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) screening is anticipated to begin by the end of 2026.

GSP Platform

Did you know we have a new newborn screening testing platform?

We have upgraded our newborn screening program with the new GSP® (Genetic Screening Processor) platform, enhancing our testing for Cystic Fibrosis (CF), Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (CAH), Thyroid-Stimulating Hormone (TSH), Total Galactose/GALT (TGAL/GALT), and Biotinidase.

What does this mean for newborn screening?

The new GSP® platform provides improved assay performance, greater automation, and enhanced consistency across several newborn screening tests. These enhancements support more accurate and reliable screening results while allowing the laboratory to update testing methods and reporting for several conditions.

As part of this transition, providers may notice updated testing algorithms, revised cutoff values, and changes to result reporting for some conditions. These improvements help strengthen the newborn screening process and support timely follow-up and intervention for infants with screen-positive results—giving newborns the best possible start in life.

2027 Maryland EHDI Stakeholder Meeting Abstract Submission

The Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) State Stakeholder meeting features several informative presentations on topics critical to improving services and outcomes for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. This annual touchpoint serves as an opportunity to connect, learn, and collaborate to strengthen Maryland's EHDI system.

Abstract Instructions: Complete the [linked submission form](#). Abstracts should be executive summaries no more than 250-500 words describing your presentation. The file format should be a Word doc or PDF and uploaded to the submission form.

All presentations are intended to be virtual and take place in May 2027. Specific meeting dates to be determined.

Presentation Topics of Interest:

- Infant Hearing Screening
- Infant Hearing Testing & Diagnosis
- Early Intervention
- Family Engagement/Family Support
- Family Voice
- Follow-up Coordination
- Other - related to the EHDI System of Care

Abstract Due Date:

October 16, 2026

For questions about the meeting or abstract submission, please contact Yasmine Price by email at yasmine.price1@maryland.gov.

September Awareness Spotlight: Newborn Screening & Sickle Cell Awareness Month

September recognizes both Newborn Screening Awareness Month and Sickle Cell Awareness Month—a time to highlight the importance of early detection, timely follow-up, and coordinated care for Maryland's infants and families.

To celebrate Newborn Screening Awareness Month, Maryland will host special activities throughout the fall, including a virtual parent perspective webinar. These events will provide opportunities to learn more about newborn screening, hear from families, and connect with partners dedicated to improving newborn health outcomes.

Stay tuned for upcoming announcements with event dates and times.

Together, we can raise awareness, promote early detection, and continue strengthening newborn screening efforts for Maryland's children and families.

OCYSHCN Needs Assessment Provider Survey

The Maryland Department of Health's Office of Children and Youth with Specific Health Care Needs has partnered with Cardea in order to learn more about the needs of children and youth with specific health care needs and their families in Maryland to inform future programs and services. Any health care providers, physicians, Early Intervention providers, audiologists, therapists (physical, occupational, or speech), or genetic counselors in Maryland providing services to those with specific health care needs are welcomed to participate. Please see the flyer with more information [here](#).

Please click [here](#) to complete the survey.

For more information, please contact Vimbai Madzura at vmadzura@cardeaservices.org.



Heart Corner: Spotlight on Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD)

Did You Know? CCHD Data Will Be Available on the Maryland Maternal and Child Health Dashboard

The Maryland Maternal and Child Health Dashboard will soon include Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD) screening data. To ensure accurate reporting and meaningful data, birth facilities should review and complete all CCHD screening information in Oz.

In Maryland, CCHD screening results are not only part of the medical record—they are also required to be reported to the state to help monitor and protect the health of the newborn population.

CCHD Reporting Requirements

Birth Facilities:

Facilities must report all CCHD screening results, including:

- Pass
- Fail
- Physician override (with reason)

Please follow the steps below to add CCHD screening results to a baby's chart in Oz:

CCHD Outcome: No Disorder Detected

CCHD Screening Results [Case Details](#)

Sc #	Age at Scrn	Test Time	Hand	Foot	Diff	Result	Suggested	In	Ov
1	25 h 7 m	01/12/2026 11:00:00 PM				Pass		M	

[View](#) [Enter Manual Screening Results](#)

Last CCHD Case Note: [View/Add Case Notes \(0\)](#)
no note available

— MDEHDI — Helpdesk: (888) 727-3366 Friday, 20 March 2026 [home](#) [contact](#)

- Select "Enter Manual Screening Results"

new search
current search
current search results
import test results
patient journey
imported files
merge patients
manage patient notes
Audiology Care

Professional Contacts
CCHD
Letters
Reminders
Tools
Reports
Transfers
Admin
Help

Preductal **Postductal**

 Oxygen Saturation

Heart Rate

Perfusion Index

SpO₂ Difference: N/A 

date/time of screen: 01/12/2026 11:00:00 PM 

screening facility: CalvertHealth Medical Center  screener: Screener, Well Nursery 

screening result: Pass  suggested result:

- Enter screening results

Patient Information:
Date of Birth: 01/11/2026

Additional Testing Information

Prenatal Ultrasound Diagnosis of Heart Defect:

Cardiac Consult Indicated/Ordered Prior to Screen for Clinical Signs/HX of Cardiac Defect:

Tests Ordered due to Failed Screening:

Date of Echocardiogram, if done: 

Echocardiogram Results, if done:

Diagnosis, if detected:

False Negative: ☐ CCHD Review Complete: ☐

[Save and Return to Child Information Page](#) [Cancel](#)

- If baby fails, please insert "additional testing information"

Transfer Cases:

If an infant is transferred to another facility before 24 hours of life, the receiving facility is responsible for completing and reporting the CCHD screening result.

Accurate and complete reporting helps ensure reliable statewide data, supports quality improvement efforts, and strengthens Maryland's commitment to newborn health.

We're shaping upcoming newsletters and would love your input: **What information would be most helpful for you to see included?**

Your feedback helps guide what we focus on—so don't hesitate to share your thoughts! Email mdh.newbornscreeningfollowup@maryland.gov.

health.maryland.gov/phpa/cyshcn/Pages/home.aspx

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