



New Jersey Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program Lost to Follow-Up Protocol

Background Information

The risk of perinatal Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) infection among infants born to HBV infected mothers ranges from 10% to 85%. Without post-exposure prophylaxis, approximately 40% of those infants will develop chronic HBV infection, which can lead to lifelong, chronic infection and death due to chronic liver disease. Due to the high risk of transmission from mother to infant, it is necessary to make every possible attempt to locate cases, get the children properly vaccinated, and ensure Post Vaccine Serology Testing (PVST) is performed. The NJDOH Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program (PHBPP) understands that some children will be lost to follow-up, but we have developed some useful steps to encourage loss prevention and help determine if a case is truly lost to follow-up. **It is important to document all attempts to locate these cases in the CDRSS case comments.**

Process and Loss Handling

1. Follow up should include at least three separate attempts, using different means of contact, before closing cases as lost to follow-up. Below are suggestions for locating individuals:
 - Attempts to reach the family by telephone should be made on different days and at different times of the day
 - Contact health care provider(s) for most current phone number and address. Obtain emergency contact information if possible
 - If a provider cannot be reached by telephone, attempt a fax or email ***Do no include PII in unencrypted emails***
 - Perform a home visit
 - Send a certified letter to the last known address
 - Be sure to check your Reopened Case Section, in CDRSS
 - CDRSS has an algorithm to reopen cases for women of childbearing age (15-55)
 - An updated pregnancy status is required for every new positive HBV lab result
2. If a pregnant woman or suspected pregnant woman of childbearing age (15-55 yrs) cannot be located:
 - Expect to keep the case open for approximately 40 weeks (9 months), which is the average length of a human pregnancy, past the date of the last lab
 - **Example:** Test Result Date: 01/01/2023; Child's birth expected by: 10/07/2023 (40 weeks)
 - During that time, periodically call mother/provider for updates and check NJIIS using the mother's name
 - Request NJDOH SME staff to check the New Jersey Electronic Birth Certificate (EBC) registry, 40 weeks following last lab result to see if the patient has delivered a baby

If you determine that a case is "lost to follow-up", but the infant is less than 24 months of age, do not close the case. Our protocol will be to monitor data sources, such as the NJ Immunization Information System (NJIIS), the NJ Electronic Birth Record (EBC), and the Communicable Disease Reporting and Surveillance System (CDRSS), to identify potential updated contact information, doctor's information, or immunization information. If a child has moved within NJ or outside of NJ, please alert the NJDOH SMEs and we will assist with case transfers.