

Initial Health Assessments for Kids in Foster Care

Access to Primary Care, Timeframes, and Assessment Requirements

Objective

- To educate Primary Care Providers (PCPs) who may treat children placed in foster care on the initial health activities that must be completed within 60 days of foster care placement.

Foster Care Transition

- **Effective July 1, 2021**, children/youth placed in foster care, including those in direct placement foster care and those in the care of Voluntary Foster Care Agencies (VFCAs) statewide, will be mandatorily enrolled into Medicaid Managed Care unless they are otherwise exempt or excluded from enrollment.
- These children/youth may present with Healthfirst insurance.

Role of 29-I Health Facilities & Local Department of Social Services

29-I Health Facilities

- A Voluntary Foster Care Agency (VFCA) that has received an Article 29-I license by the Department of Health to provide limited health-related services to children in foster care.
- The 29-I License enables facilities to provide Core Limited Health-Related Services (CLHRS) and Other Limited Health-Related Services (OLHRS).

Local Department of Social Services (LDSS)

- A department in the State of New York that provides and administers a full range of publicly funded programs.

Foster Care Population Profile and Attributes

Children/youth often enter foster care without having had access to traditional preventive healthcare services.

These children/youth require an increase in the frequency of their health monitoring

The impact of the trauma these children/youth have experienced is profound

It is essential that they have immediate access to services upon placement in foster care

They should have NO interruption in the provision of ongoing service

Access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare is essential to children/youth placed in foster care

They have higher rates of birth defects, developmental delays, mental/behavioral health needs, and physical disabilities

Foster Care Initial Health Service Activities

- Initial health activities must be completed within 60 days of foster care placement.
- The 29-I Health Facilities and Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) are responsible for facilitating the completion of these activities within the State mandated timeframes.
- Providers should be aware of the access timeframes and partner with the 29-I Health Facilities and LDSS to complete the health service activities within the mandated timeframes.
- Initial health service activities include the following:
 - **Immediate screening** of the child's medical condition, including assessment for child abuse/neglect.
 - **Comprehensive health evaluation** that shall include all elements of EPSDT (as required by Medicaid) and shall be completed within 30 days of entering care in conjunction with the comprehensive health evaluation. The EPSDT screen shall include federally mandated aspects related to the following:
 - Comprehensive health and developmental history, including physical exam, immunizations, laboratory tests (including lead toxicity screening), and health education
 - Hearing
 - Dental, including ongoing preventive and restorative care
 - Mental Health/SUD
 - Vision
 - Follow-up health evaluation and treatments that incorporate information from the five initial assessments
 - Ongoing efforts to obtain child's existing medical records and document medical activities

Timeframes for Completion of Initial Health Services

Providers need to partner with the 29-I Health Facilities and LDSS to complete the health service activities within the mandated timeframes included below.

Initial Health Services				
Timeframe	Activity	Mandated Activity	Mandated Timeframe	Who Performs
24 Hours	Immediate medical screening, including an assessment for abuse/neglect	X	X	Health practitioner (preferred) or Child Welfare caseworker/health staff
5 Days	HIV risk assessment for children under the age of 13	X	X	Child Welfare caseworker or designated staff
10 Days	Request consent for release of medical records and treatment	X	X	Child Welfare caseworker or health staff
30 Days	Initial medical assessment	X	X	Health practitioner
30 Days	Initial dental assessment	X	X	Health practitioner
30 Days	Initial mental health assessment	X	R	Mental health practitioner
30 days	Family Planning Education & Counseling and follow-up healthcare for youth age 12 and older (or younger, as appropriate)	X	X	Health practitioner

Timeframes for Completion of the Initial Health Services

Providers need to partner with the 29-1 Health Facilities and LDSS to complete the health service activities within the mandated timeframes included below.

Timeframe	Activity	Mandated Activity	Mandated Timeframe	Who Performs
45 Days	Initial developmental assessment	X	R	Health practitioner
45 Days	Initial substance abuse assessment	R	R	Health practitioner
60 Days	Follow-up health evaluation	R	R	Health practitioner

- The table above outlines the timeframes for initial health activities to be completed within 60 days of foster care placement.
- An “X” in the Mandated Activity and/or Mandated Timeframe column indicates that the activity is required within the indicated timeframe.
- An “R” indicates that the activity is required by OCFS.