April 30, 2020

2 PM MST/4 PM EST

**Attendance:**

**CDC:** Marcus Gaffney

**DSHPSHWA:** Linda Hazard, Marcia Fort

**HRSA:** Bethany Applebaum, Maea Banks, Sarah Beth McLellan, Treeby Brown, and Michelle Koplitz

**NCHAM:** Karl White, Mandy Jay, William Eiserman, Karen Munoz and Alyson Ward

**AAP:** Christina Boothby and Müge Chavdar

**H&V:** Janet DesGeorges and Lisa Kovacs

**LEND:** Maureen Johnson

1. **COVID-19 Updates.** Each group provided a brief update regarding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on EHDI programs.
2. **H&V:** H&V is continuing to offer virtual office hours for FBOs to share challenges, strategies, and resources they are using. Families have shared some fear about things reopening and especially for a deaf or hard of hearing child with additional conditions. Other concerns include children’s education at home, low referrals to FBO, and families feeling overwhelmed with virtual visits/therapy sessions, especially with other children at home.

The Hands & Voices Advocacy, Support, and Training (ASTra) program is working on a tip sheet for parent involvement which includes ideas for families when schools are not meeting.

Guide-by-Your Side held a virtual meeting this past week featuring a guest speaker on how to care for yourself while caring for others.

H&V is also looking at previously-developed resources that may be beneficial during COVID-19.

1. **DSPSHWA**: Linda reported that one of the biggest concerns people have is how difficult it is to work in a system that is constantly changing. Some hospitals are now having audiologists back at the office and are doing evaluations for rescreening babies who didn’t pass or were discharged without a screening test. District health offices around the states could be helpful in screening during the recovery mode.

EI has seen a huge drop in referrals due to pediatricians.

Should babies of mothers who have had COVID-19 be considered high risk and receive longer follow up? Other concerns include how to document a baby not seen because of COVID-19 and will babies who move be more difficult to follow due to incomplete data as a result of COVID-19 issues?

As more states and clinics start to open up what is being done in terms of sanitation and how those procedures are being communicated to families. What are care providers doing to protect families as well as what patients are doing to protect the medical staff?

1. **AAP**: One of the main concerns of pediatricians is missed well-child visits including vaccinations. AAP, in partnership with AMA, has been promoting well-child visits via telemedicine. AAP has released new resources for pediatricians, including a series of free webinars on child abuse and neglect and how to identify children who are at risk. Another webinar for adjusting family mental health needs discussed the impact of COVID-19 on family mental health. Müge will share these resources.

Face masks for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing prohibit facial cues. Medical providers are unable to find guidelines ­or recommendations of companies that are making facemasks with a transparent part over the mouth.

Müge expressed concern for physicians who may not have access to an ASL interpreter. Physicians could use a communication card if no interpreter is available. Video relay interpreting could also be made available for these patients. Michelle will share additional resources for physicians who need these services.

If masks are required for a DHH child once appointments are being done in person, families should advocate a mask be provided.

1. **HRSA**: Project officers are making calls to their states. Many people are considering how Telehealth can be used to assist with recovery activities.
2. **AUCD/LEND**: Maureen will share AUCD resources from the early childhood resource center, teleintervention, distance learning, and activities for families at home. AUCD is offering a webinar How UCEDDs and LEND programs can partner with state and local early intervention and special education systems during this, and future pandemics on Tuesday, April 28th.

How is the transition from Part C to Part B programs being done without individualized assessments? Lisa Kovacs recommended a change in deadlines so the child can continue to receive EI services through early childhood programs until face-to-face assessments are possible.

1. **CDC:**  The CDC is reviewing the impact of COVID-19 on state and territory programs and changes that have been made to different EHDI programs. The CDC is also taking part in meetings with colleagues across the CDC involved in newborn screening overall and what the impact is in the 3 different areas of newborn screening. The CDC sent an email to all state and territorial EHDI programs offering assistance to reporting EHDI Data. CDC NOFO awards should be announced sometime in June with work scheduled to start July 1st.

The CDC recently posted new downloadable guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting public places. The CDC is also looking at how to collect and report the 2019 and 2020 data HSFS (Hearing Screening and Follow-up Survey) data that will be impacted by what states are doing to respond to COVID-19.

1. **NCHAM:** NCHAM is preparing a short flyer comprised of input from EHDI coordinators and other stakeholders intended to educate health care and other providers on the importance of early screening and follow up even through the pandemic. The flyer will be editable so each state can put their contact information on before disseminating throughout their state.

NCHAM is working with DSPSHWA, EHDI CHATS and this partner group to discuss how we can best engage people and use resources in providing support to EHDI Programs in support of Better Screening Hearing Month (BSHM). We are planning two full-length webinars to be presented. 1) Kim Cavitt is presenting Practical Considerations in EHDI Program Delivery During COVID-19 on May 12th, and 2) Kristi Blaiser will present Practical Ways to Provide Support with Technology on May 14th. Five coffee-break webinars will be 10-15 minutes presentations on Bright Spots and Innovations related to COVID-19 followed by Q&A.

We are also discussing the possibility of a virtual meeting about COVID-19 issues with NewSTEPS and are exploring the possibility of working with NewSTEPS to develop Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) guidelines for EHDI programs similar to what they have done previously with blood spot screening programs.

NCHAM continues to update COVID-19 resources on their website.

Resources shared during the meeting:

* <https://www.theclearmask.com/>
* <https://www.nad.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Model-Hospital-Policy.pdf>
* <https://www.nad.org/about-us/position-statements/minimum-standards-for-video-remote-interpreting-services-in-medical-settings/>
* <https://www.nad.org/about-us/position-statements/position-statement-on-health-care-access-for-deaf-patients/>
* <https://www.handsandvoices.org/pdf/covid-19/WeWearMasks.pdf>- a simple story for children about why people are wearing a mask
* <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/cares-waiver-report.pdf>
* <https://handsandvoices.org/resources/video/index.htm>
* <https://handsandvoices.org/resources/pubs/1-3-6-ehdi-Jul2019-infographic.pdf>

**The next EHDI Partners Meeting about COVID-19 is scheduled for Thursday, May 14th at 2 PM MST/4 PM EST.**