

Memo

Suspension of Newborn Hearing Screening

28 March 2020

Distribution List: Dept of Health, ANCLA's, Operational Managers, Community Operations, Paeditricians, Northgate Public Services.

Dear Professional,

The newborn hearing screening programme has continued during the emerging COVID 19 crises, however following the announcement of the governments "Mandatory Stay at Home Order" newborn hearing screening will be suspended with immediate effect as of 28/3/2020.

Stringent efforts will be made to ensure that all babies born are captured on the newborn hearing screening ICT system in order to ensure they are placed on the Care Pathway for Screening to reduce the likelihood of any baby missing their Hearing Screen. Due to the current exceptional situation this may need to be done retrospectively and in these circumstances the normal screening period of infants upto 3 months of age will be extended to 6 months and additional outpatient clinics provided to complete any screening backlog.

The only prioritised cases that should be referred to community Audiology services is that of suspected or confirmed bacterial meningitis where there is a risk of significant hearing loss and potential for ossification which requires urgent radiological and cochlear implant assessment. In these cases the paediatrician / medical professional should contact the local Community Audiology service.

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Should you have any further queries on this matter contact me.

Kind Regards



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