Thursday, January 04, 2018

To: Virginia NICU EI Collaborative Participants

From: Betsy Cole Archer
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Subject: Virginia NICU EI Collaborative Referral Guidance and Referral Form Release

On behalf of the Virginia NICU EI Collaborative project team and partners, I am pleased to announce the release of the newly-developed Referral Guidance and Referral Forms (enclosed). I want to thank you for the contributions each of you has made to enhancing the referral process, including these documents, to increase the quality and quantity of referrals of potentially eligible children to the Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia (I&TC), Early Intervention Services (EI).

The referral documents serve several purposes:

1. Enhance provider understanding for which patients may need a referral;
2. Begin the conversation with the family about EI services before discharge and help inform them about the next steps in working with EI service coordinator;
3. Provide more complete information to EI. This enhances their understanding of the child’s starting place by including discharge summary, NICU therapy assessments, etc.;
4. The parent’s signature provides evidence that a conversation about EI has begun. The absence of the signature does not mean the child is not referred. It only means that the EI system manager cannot share information/status of referral with the pediatrician or primary health care provider, nor with the referral source. When the signature is included, if EI has difficulty contacting the parent, the signature allows the system manager to work with you as the referral source to reestablish contact with the family.

I recognize that not every hospital will be able to use the Referral Guidance and Forms exactly as shown. If your facility is unable to adopt the exact form, we ask that you use this as a template, and modify the forms your facility is currently using. You may also elect to use of the current I&TC forms, but I would encourage you to use the Referral Guidance (Page 1) as a teaching tool to increase awareness among your staff of conditions that may make a child eligible for services.

Whichever form you use, we ask that you commit to the following minimum guidelines when making a referral:

1. Include parent signature, for the reasons stated above.
2. Include discharge summary, at a minimum. If possible, include NICU therapy assessments.
3. Include a written diagnosis. Provide the ICD 10 code, when possible.
I applaud your commitment to achieving the aims set forth in this Collaborative. On behalf of the Collaborative partners, thank you for the work you are leading locally to ensure each child receives the best care throughout the continuum of services.

Enclosures:
Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia Early Intervention Referral Guidance
Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia Updated Referral Guide