

ORR State Letter

05-07

Date: May 25, 2005

TO: STATE REFUGEE COORDINATORS
STATE REFUGEE HEALTH COORDINATORS
NATIONAL VOLAGS
MAAs

FROM: Nguyen Van Hanh, Ph.D.
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement

SUBJECT: CDC Recommendations for Lead Poisoning Prevention in Refugee Children

The purpose of this letter is to alert all programs working with refugees that the CDC has released its revised recommendations on the testing and preventive treatment of refugee children for elevated lead levels and lead poisoning. The recommendations are attached to this state letter, and can also be accessed online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/lead.htm>.

The recommendations propose several important revisions to existing lead screening practices for refugee children. The CDC recommends that children *up to 16 years of age* be given an initial test for elevated lead levels. Children *under 6 years of age* should be given a follow-up test 3-6 months after their initial test, regardless of their initial test results.

Since lead absorption has been directly correlated to malnutrition, all refugee children should receive nutritional assessments during their initial health assessments. Refugee children who show evidence of malnutrition should be provided with the appropriate nutritional and supplemental therapies.

The costs for the blood lead level tests and corresponding nutritional tests and therapies should be covered under Medicaid, Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) or the State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

If you have any other questions concerning this State letter, please contact Marta Brenden (ORR) at 202-205-3589 or email at mbrenden@acf.hhs.gov. Or contact Arjun Prasad (OGHA) at 301-443-7243 or email at aprasad@osophs.dhhs.gov.

Attachment