



Standardizing Screening Processes and Workflows: *Strategies, Ideas, and Resources for Community Health Centers*

Overview

During a learning network session on standardizing screening processes and workflows, community health centers identified critical opportunities to make early childhood screening workflows more efficient and accurate. By using the care team's expertise and listening to family feedback, health centers can enhance their screening workflows and proactively identify patient needs through improved screening data accuracy and monitoring. Creating and enhancing these workflows as a team ensures they are the best fit for a practice's structure and patient population.

Practical Strategies

- **Use a team approach to develop and enhance the screening process.** A team approach ensures that the screening workflow is the best fit for the practice's structure and meets the needs of families. Include a variety of team members (e.g., clinicians, nurses, front office staff, family leaders) to identify challenges and improvement opportunities across the workflow.
- **Use family feedback to strengthen the screening workflow and address challenges.** Family feedback allows community health centers to confirm that the screening workflow supports the family's needs. Health centers can also identify challenges that families face in accessing care, such as confusion about screening results, difficulty connecting to referrals, or language translation errors.
- **Explore additional validated screening tools to capture holistic patient health data.** Incorporating other screening tools – like social-emotional or perinatal depression screenings – into the workflow allows health centers to fully address and capture a child's needs. Implementing these screenings can reinforce family-centered care and lead to new services that support families.

Actionable Ideas

- **Create a quality improvement team with a variety of team members and family leaders.** Include front desk staff, medical assistants, nurses, referral coordinators, clinicians, social or community health workers, and family leaders to leverage collective expertise and ensure the practice's screening workflow is optimized.
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- **Develop a screening tool script to improve accuracy and completion.** Using standard screening language with key talking points can help families understand the purpose of the screening tool, answer screening questions accurately, identify areas of concern, and feel comfortable and informed.
- **Collaborate with other health centers to share screening best practices and lessons learned.** Connecting with other health centers can promote smooth transitions in screening workflows and help reduce implementation challenges.
- **Strengthen and use early childhood development data.** Monitoring user-friendly data on a regular basis can help health centers be proactive in identifying gaps in screenings, patient care, and referrals. Explore opportunities with the data management or electronic health record (EHR) system team to create summary data outputs or specific screening and referral EHR dashboards. This can help highlight opportunities to enhance early detection of behavioral and developmental concerns.

Resources

- [Getting Started Guide: Implementing a Screening Process – Early Childhood Developmental Health Systems: Evidence to Impact Center](#)
- Epic Well Child Visit templates (available in Epic EHR)
- [Well Visit Planner®](#)
- [Ages & Stages Questionnaire \(ASQ\) Workflow](#)
- [Communicating With Families Screening Resources](#)

If you have questions, please email us at ECDHSCenter@zerotothree.org.



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