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## Connecticut Anemia Screening Guidelines

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Childhood Anemia  
Screening  
Recommendations

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Amelia Anderson

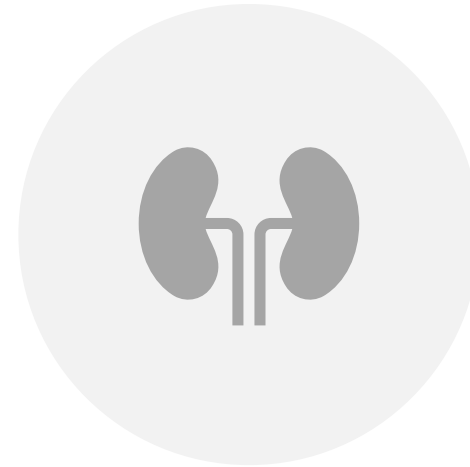
September 2020

Dr. Maura Conway & Kathleen Dorso

# Problem



CONNECTICUT REQUIRES ROUTINE ANEMIA SCREENING AT VARIOUS POINTS DURING A CHILD'S EDUCATION. IT IS OFTEN UNCLEAR WHEN SCREENING IS NEEDED AND HOW THESE REQUIREMENTS COMPARE TO MEDICAL GUIDELINES.



ANEMIA SCREENING REQUIRES A FINGER-STICK HEMOGLOBIN. WHILE AN INDIVIDUAL TEST IS INEXPENSIVE, THE COST IS SUBSTANTIAL IF SCREENING IS BEING DONE ON EVERY CHILD WHEN IT IS NOT INDICATED.



# Public Health Cost

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- Although uncommon, untreated anemia does exist in children in the US
  - 2% to 3.8% of school-age children in the US have anemia
  - Untreated anemia has negative cognitive and physical consequences
- The cost of screening is minimal, previous studies have estimated the cost of Hb screening to be \$9 a person

# Community Perspectives

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- This project was requested by Dr. Conway. In August and September, there was an influx of back-to-school physicals and she found herself frequently wondering how to best comply with Connecticut state guidelines.
- Kathleen Dorso, an APRN in the Newtown Primary Care group, voiced similar concerns, stating that she often drew hemoglobin on every child she saw for a physical. She was interested in clarification about the guidelines.

# Intervention & Methodology

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- I reviewed all major childhood anemia screening guidelines made by medical organizations and agencies. Additionally, I reviewed the statute in Connecticut state law that requires routine anemia screenings for back-to-school physicals.
  - I compiled these recommendations into an easy-to-read handout for the providers in the Newtown Primary Care clinic.
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# Results

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- While the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatricians recommend routine anemia screening at 9-12 months of age, the US Preventative Service Task Force and the American Academy of Family Medicine cite insufficient evidence to support this practice.
- Of note, no medical organization endorses routine anemia screening in school-age children.
- However, Connecticut law does require anemia screening upon entry into public school, in either 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and in either 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

# Evaluation

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- The efficacy of this intervention could be evaluated by analyzing the total number of finger-stick hemoglobin tests done this past August and September to those done next August and September as well as the ages of the children in which they were done.
- Ideally, the total number would decrease and there would be clear peaks in children going into either 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.



# Recommendations

- It would be helpful to create similar provider education handouts on other screening tests. In particular, there appears to be some variation and uncertainty in when to routinely screen for anemia and lipid abnormalities in adults.

# References

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